Saturday Review

of Literature

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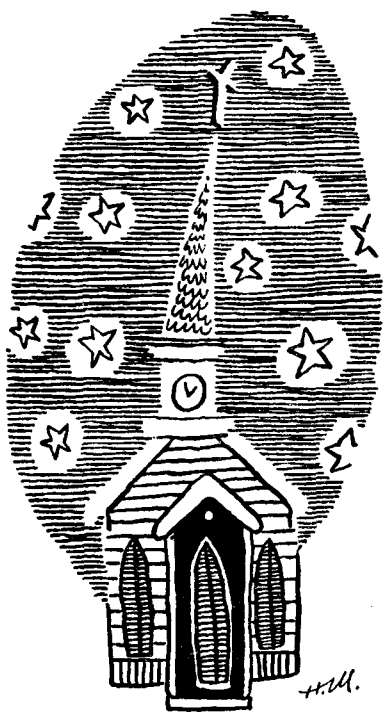
TRADE Winds

JUST BROWSING, MISTER....

EVERY SEASON a handful of key people in the book business turn to authoring volumes of their own, and since no one knows better what the public is looking for, their efforts usually are handsomely rewarded. A mighty fine job has been done this fall, for instance, by Ralph Henry and Lucile Pannell in "American Heritage" (Rand McNally), a collection of songs, poems, and snippets that will awaken fond memories on every page. Between writing chores the editors preside over the Carson, Pirie, Scott book department in Chicago. Furthermore, they have made it one spot where a carefree salesman or his peregrinating boss knows he will get as warm a welcome as the most affluent customer. Result: the trade to a man is rooting for the success of the latest Henry-Pannell collaboration. Miss Pannell, incidentally, captured the 1949 Constance Skinner Award as "the outstanding bookwoman of the year." . . . Wallace Reyburn, who made *New Liberty* the top-circulation magazine in Canada in his three-year hitch in the editor's chair, has written a racy and try-and-stop-me-ish book of war memoirs in "Some of It Was Fun" (Thomas Nelson, of Toronto). One of his most harrowing experiences came when a colonel mistook him for Quent Reynolds. It happened to be a colonel Quent had taken apart in print. . . . Another disillusioning moment occurred in Naples when a grateful native offered to introduce him to a sister at home. "Is she beautiful?" asked Reyburn. "Oh, bella! bella!" enthused the native. "Young?" "Si! Si! Si!" "And is she pure?" persisted Reyburn. The native turned from him in disgust, remarking, "You must be crazy." . . . A third entry in the fall book lists is a top-drawer juvenile called "Lance and His First Horse" (Whittlesey), by that dashing movie star Jack Holt and an even more beautiful accomplice, Carolyn Coggins, the Jane Russell of the *Herald Tribune Book Review*. . . .

SOME WEEKS AGO, TRADE WINDS published a note from Muriel Fuller crediting the old Siwash stories to George Ade. By this time practically every alumnus of Knox College has risen in wrath to point out that Siwash was created by George Fitch, of Knox '97, and not by Ade, that upstart from Purdue '87. Sorry! . . . Julian Messner, Inc., will publish Frances Parkinson Keyes's "Therese, Saint of a Little Way" in March. The redoubtable Mrs. K. is practically a spring list all by herself. . . . And how long is it since one man has been the author of two of the three best-selling works of non-fiction in the country? Father Thomas Merton's "The Waters of Siloe" and "The Seven Storey Mountain" are giving Harcourt, Brace's receiving tellers callouses counting up the shekels. Must have been his early training as art editor of the Columbia *Jester*. . . . Father Merton, incidentally, does not receive one penny of the royalties. Everything goes to his Trappist order. . . . Abel Green, embarked on a study of Spanish, is composing a poem that begins, "Thirty days hacienda, April, May, y Sombrero. All the rest hasta la vista. . . ." Fortunately, he's stuck at this point. . . . Bob McMillen, associate editor of *Farm Journal* (and, come to think of it, a college mate of Thomas Merton), must be a member of Green's club. He was dawdling over a second cup of coffee one Sunday morning, reading "The Canterbury Tales," when his father demanded, "What have you got there?" McMillen answered airily, "Just my cup and Chaucer." . . .



RONALD FIRBANK, whose clever and decadent trivia were quite the thing in the Twenties with the smart young people who also collected firsts of Michael Arlen's "Piracy" and Arthur Machen's "The Hill of Dreams," has been rescued from oblivion by New Directions, whose omnibus of five Firbank novels evoked enough present-day interest, as a matter of fact, to justify two printings in advance of publication. . . . The surest way for a deserving publisher to promote a couple of honest bucks is to sponsor a new cook book. Simon & Schuster's lavishly-illustrated "Fireside Cook Book" is going like blazes, and Grosset & Dunlap's "Encyclopedic Cook Book" is not far behind. Stores cannot keep in stock "The Joys of Cooking," the new edition of "The Good Housekeeping Cook Book," and the umpty-umth revision of good old Fannie Farmer. And Neiman-Marcus's "A Taste of Texas," featuring such succulent and unusual dishes as Houston pecan whiskey cake, broiled steak with roquefort sauce, Dallas chili con carne, mincemeat mother-in-law (a dessert, pardner), and Paris (Texas) onion soup, exhausted two editions in as many weeks. . . . World's "Bruce Rogers Bible," limited to 975 copies at $150 each, is the most expensive book to be published in America since the Grabhorn edition of "Leaves of Grass" came out at $100 a copy in 1930. It represents seventy-nine-year-old Bruce Rogers, dean of designers, at the peak of his great career. . . . At the other end of the price range, Garden City's new 1,344-page edition of H. G. Wells's "Outline of History," revised to date by Raymond Postgate, is, at $2.95 a copy, one of the prize bargains of the holiday season. . . .

UNLIKE THE supercilious fellow who condescends to cover new films for *The New Yorker*, I happen to enjoy motion pictures very much, and when I come across such superlative jobs as "Intruder in the Dust" and "All the King's Men," I wish I could have my earnest advice, "Go to see these two fine adaptations of two fine novels," printed in block letters in red ink. . . . On the other hand, any resemblance between "That Forsyte Woman" and the Galsworthy saga upon which it allegedly is based is due to an unaccountable oversight on the part of the small army of writers who wrestled with the script. . . . Bob Hope's "The Great Lover" is first-rate entertainment all the way through, and if you think it's impos-

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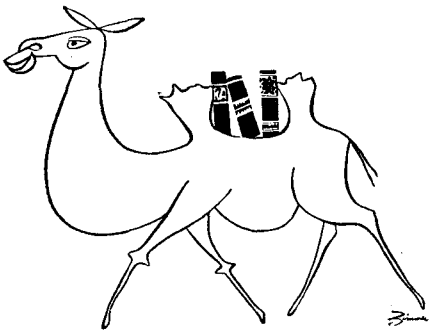
sible to steal a picture from under Bob Hope's nose, observe the craftsmanship of Roland Young in the unlikely role of a gentleman strangler. . . . "The Heiress" is another hit picture that makes you feel the present soul-searching austerity wave in Hollywood is resulting in finer, more adult entertainment all around. Olivia de Havilland and Miriam Hopkins, as usual, give fine performances. But heavens, how come Willie Wyler cast Miriam as the elderly aunt? I can't be as old as all that! . . . "Jolson Sings Again" contains over twenty of the old master's greatest song hits, and if there's anything finer in the state of Carolina—or the State Theatre on Seventh Avenue—than an earful of Jolson giving out with "Rock-a-bye My Baby with a Dixie Melody," I'd like to hear about it. . . . I will get even with the man who dragged me to see Betty Hutton in "Red Hot and Blue" if it takes me five years. . . .

ON A RECENT session of the television program "Who Said That?" I declared that, in my opinion, James Thurber was far and away the greatest humorist alive in America today—a statement I am prepared to defend with my fists, if necessary, against all comers smaller than myself and more nearsighted. Roland Williams, editor of *The Bermudian* magazine, has sent me a copy of the issue that tells of the holiday spent by the



Thurbers not long ago at Mrs. Ada Trimmingham's in Paget. Andy White had been there first, and inscribed a copy of his "One Man's Meat" as follows:

To Waterville, in Paget East,
I send my love and greeting;
To Ada, mistress of the Feast
And a pioneer of eating;
To all Bermuda, sprawled in sun,
Where I would gladly linger:
O matchless soil, from coral won!
O ring on England's finger!

On the day Thurber ran across White's inscription rain happened to be pouring down, as indeed it had been doing for all of his first seventy-two hours on Bermuda's "matchless soil." Thurber, slightly put out by this turn of events, appended these lines of his own to White's effusion:

I, too, like Mr. E. B. White,
Though I am not a singer,
Admire this island, slim and bright,
This ring on England's finger;
But memories of rain and blow,
And darker weather rankle,
O aching corn on England's toe!
O sore on England's ankle!

Mr. Thurber didn't hear a radio broadcast from America once in his month and a half in Bermuda, and he says it was like a year in Arcady. One program he seemed to miss, however, was the "Answer Man," who was the innocent source of his most successful dinner-conversation gambit. Even the prettiest and most flutter-brained partner seemed to respond unfailingly to the casual query, "Madam, do you know how to take blood stains out of a buffalo robe?" Most of them gazed at him in admiration and murmured, "Now where did you learn a thing like that?" but one lady crossed him up. *Her* comment was, "How on earth did you get blood stains on your buffalo robe?" —BENNETT CERF.

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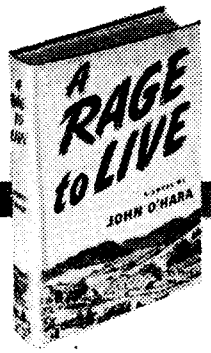

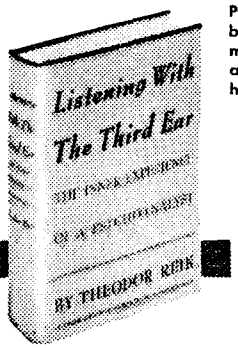

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The Saturday Review of Literature

What Does It Take to Enjoy a Poem?

JOHN CIARDI

WHAT does it take to enjoy a poem?

Let us begin with a really difficult piece of symbolism:

Hickory, dickory, dock,
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, dickory, dock.

Not really complicated you say? Consider these questions: What does it mean? Why a clock? Why a mouse? Isn't it fairly unusual for mice to run up clocks? What is the point of inventing this esoteric incident? And since the mouse ran up it and down again, the chances are it's a grandfather clock. What does that signify? And isn't it a fairly obsolete notion? Why did the clock strike one? (To rhyme with "down"? But is "down" a rhyme for "one," or is this another slovenly piece of modernism? Why didn't the poem make the clock strike three and the mouse turn to flee? It didn't, of course, but why?) What is the origin and significance of all these unexplained symbols? (A symbol is something that stands for something else. What is the something else?) Or is this simply nonsense verse? (I find that hard to believe.) And even as nonsense, what is there in this particular combination of sounds and actions (symbolic actions?) that makes this jingle survive a long word-of-mouth transmission in the English voice-box? Why mightn't the poem as easily have read:

Thickery, thackery, tea,
An owl flew into the tree.
The tree's down,
The owl's flown,
Thickery, thackery, tea.

I submit: (a) that my parody is a bad poem, that the original is a good one, and that a serious and learned series of lectures might be devoted to the reasons why each is so; (b) that none of the questions I have raised are meaningless and that in fact many critics have made a career of asking this sort of question of less perfect poems, and (c) that neither you nor I know what the poem "means." I further submit that such considerations have frightened many readers away from good poems.

But—and this is the point—the child in whose babble the poem is immediate and alive has no critical theories and no troubles. He is too busy enjoying the pleasures of poetry. The moral is obvious: do not ask the poem to be more rational than you are. The way to read a poem is with pleasure: with the child's pleasure in tasting the syllables on his tongue, with the marvel of the child's eye that can really see the mouse run up the clock, be panic-stricken, and run down again, with the child's hand-clapping, rhythmic joy. In short, to read a poem, come prepared for delight.

But if a child can do it why can't you?

That question deserves attention, but before considering it, I should like to say one thing of which I am fairly certain: everyone writes poetry sometime in his life. Bad poetry is what we all have in common. Such poetry generally occurs in three categories: as invective, as obscenity, and as love-yelps.

The obscenity I assume everyone to be capable of documenting. Here is an example of invective:

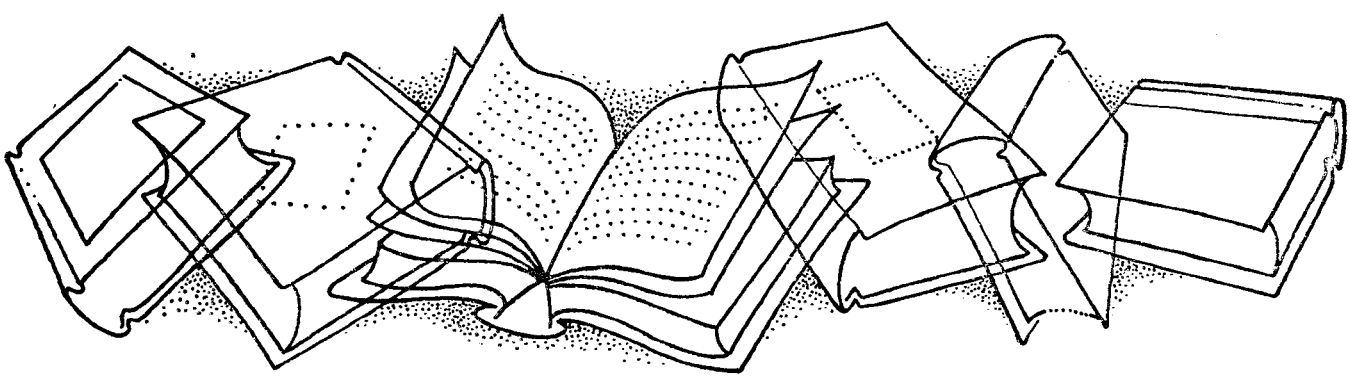
Billy Billy, dirty coat
Stinks like a nanny goat.

And here is a fair example of the love-yelp:

Have you ever been in love?
I ask you: have you ever been in love?
Have you?

I have ..... I know!

"Billy Billy," you will recognize as a kind of "Georgie-Porgie puddin' and pie," but if you think it peculiar to your childhood or to grandfather's I urge you to look in the encyclopedia under Fescennine for an inkling of the antiquity of man's pleasure in jingling taunts at other men. "Billy Billy," as nearly as I know, was composed in our fourth-grade schoolyard



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by a former young poet now in the coal business and was used to taunt our local sloven, who has since washed-up, cleaned-up, grown-up, and joined the police force. Almost inevitably it earned its young author a punch in the nose: a fair example of the way criticism operates in our society to kill the poetic impulse. The love-yelp, a reasonably deplorable specimen of its class, was submitted for the Tufts College literary magazine when I was an undergraduate assistant editor. Anyone who will take the trouble to be reasonably honest can almost certainly summon from himself examples of at least one of these forms he has attempted at one time or another, and enjoyed attempting.

IF, THEN, the impulse to bad poetry is so widespread (though I insist that "Billy Billy" is not at all bad), why is it so few people enjoy reading what passes as good poetry? Why is it, for example, that in a nation of 146 million presumably literate people, the average sale for a book of poems is about 500 copies? Is it that the pleasures and outlets one finds in composing are purely private—that only one's own creation, good or bad, is interesting? Considering the variety of egos which has banded together to pass as the human race, that seems one reasonably good guess, but there is obviously more to it that is worth some speculation:

First, it seems fairly obvious that the process of growing up in a nuts-and-bolts world inhibits the poetry impulse in most people. Somewhere along the line, they learn to say, "Let's face it; we must be practical." Dickens's School of Hard Facts is with us all, and poetry, like poor Sissy Jupe, is still required to blush because it cannot define a horse as "Quadruped. Gramnivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive." So the literalist on his rostrum demands the rational: "What *does* hickory-dickory-dock *mean*? It *has* to mean *something*." It does indeed, but not anything you can paraphrase, not anything you can prove. It means only what every child knows—delight. And delight is not a function of the rational mind. As Archibald MacLeish has written, "A poem must not mean, but be." Whereby, of course, it does mean, but not nuts and bolts. To see what it does mean, you need only go read Mother Goose to a child: you will then be observing a natural audience busy with the process of receiving poetry as it was intended to be received.

Point one, then, is delight: if you mean to enjoy the poem as a poem, stop cross-examining it, stop trying to force it to "make sense." The poem *is* sense. Or if you must cross-examine remember at least that the third degree is not the poem. Most poems do reveal themselves most richly after close examination, but the examination is, at best, only a preparation for reading the poem. It is never the reading itself.

More precisely put, an understanding of the rational surfaces of the poem (the prose part of the poem) may, in some cases, point a direction toward the poem. The poem is never experienced, however, until it is felt in the same complex of mind and nerve from which it arose—the subconscious. That experience sometimes happens immediately, and is sometimes helped along by our conscious (rational) perceptions. But to substitute rational analysis for the larger contact of the subconscious is to reject the poem. The kind of communication that happens in a poem is infinitely closer to that of music than to that of prose.

Second, poetry must never be read as an exercise in "reading-speed," that deplorable mental-mangle for increasing the rate of destruction of text-book English. The fastest reader is not the best reader any more than the best conductor of Beethoven is the man who gets the orchestra through the "Eroica" in the shortest elapsed time. Why not take a stop-watch to the Symphony, if this is your measure? Obviously because music declares its own pace. But so does good poetry. By rhyme, by the word-values of the poem, by the sequence of syllables, and by all these taken together, good poetry contains its own notation. "We broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff" can no more be read at the same rate as "Bury the great duke with an Empire's lamentation" than *allegro vivace* can intelligently be played *adagio*.

Point two, then: leave your efficiency out of this and look for the notation within the poem. Every poem is in part an effort to reconstruct the poet's speaking voice. Listen for it. Listen to the poet on records and at public readings (but know the poems well before you do). You may discover more than you could have foreseen. In any case when reading a book of poems you must be prepared to linger. That thin volume will take at least as much reading as a detective story.

Third (and of course related to our second consideration): read it aloud. Few poems will come whole at one hearing. Few piano pieces will. But once you have *learned* either, their

pleasure is always ready to repeat itself. Even difficult poems are meant to go into the voice-box. Put them there.

Fourth: there are still readers who must be specifically cautioned that twentieth-century poetry is not nineteenth-century poetry. That fact may seem rather obvious, but the point is not frivolously made. Your teachers and mine were products of nineteenth-century culture, and almost certainly the first poems you were given to read were nineteenth-century poems. I hasten to add that the nineteenth century was a great literary achievement, but it began with one dreadful flaw: it tended to take itself much too seriously. The mind of man seemed to suffer the illusion that it lived in a cathedral, and when man spoke he was not only too likely to pontificate, but he was pre-inclined to select from experience only the vast, the lofty, the divine-in-nature. The result was what Cleanth Brooks has called "the poetry of high-seriousness." Opposed to that tradition is the poetry of "wit," poetry in which the mind most definitely does not live in a cathedral but in the total world, open to the encounter of all sorts of diverse elements and prepared to take them as they come, fusing fleas and sunsets, love and charley-horses, beauty and trivia into what is conceived to be a more inclusive range of human experience. Judge the poet of "wit" by the standards of "high-seriousness" and he will likely appear crass and obnoxious; judge the poet of high-seriousness by the standards of wit and he will likely appear a rather pompous and myopic ass.

The point, then, is quite simple: judge the poet by his intent: if you tend to the illusion that you are on your way to church when you pick up a poem, stop off at the super-market and watch man against his background of groceries for a while. The church is still next door, and I am quite sure that one of the things "modern" (whatever that is) poetry is trying to say, is that the cities of our life contain both church-spires and Wheaties, and that both of them, for better or worse, impinge upon man's consciousness, and are therefore the material of poetry.

A fifth consideration I can best

(*Continued on page 25*)

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Jane. *If you have read Jane Austen's "Northanger Abbey," "Sense and Sensibility," "Pride and Prejudice," "Mansfield Park," "Emma," and "Persuasion" so often that you know them by heart, if you are familiar with her juvenilia and her "fragments," if you are acquainted with the details of her life and know something about the scenes in which it was spent—then you are eligible for membership in a fast-burgeoning cult whose members call themselves "Janeites." Much of the fun of being a Janeite is that you may join in spirited debates about such questions as which of Jane's "masterpieces" is best and the respective merits of her characters. The present renascence of Janeism began about five years ago, impelled by the publication of Sheila Kaye-Smith's and G. B. Stern's "Speaking of Jane." It reached floodtide with the recent issuance of the four volumes reviewed below by Ben Ray Redman.*

For the Enchanted Circle

JANE AUSTEN. By Elizabeth Jenkins. New York: Pellegrini & Cudahy. 410 *pp.* $4.

PARSON AUSTEN'S DAUGHTER. By Helen Ashton. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 337 *pp.* $3.

PEMBERLEY SHADES. By D. A. Bonavia-Hunt. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 317 *pp.* $3.

MORE ABOUT JANE AUSTEN. By Sheila Kaye-Smith and G. B. Stern. New York: Harper & Bros. 270 *pp.* $3.50

By Ben Ray Redman

ALMOST sixty years ago an editor of Jane Austen's letters wrote: "The recent cult for Miss Austen, which has resulted in no less than ten new editions of her novels within a decade and three memoirs by different hands within as many years, have [*sic*] made the facts of her life familiar to most readers." Since then the literate public has so increased in numbers that one would hardly dare count on the the familiarity of "most readers" with the life that was passed with such seeming uneventfulness at Steventon, Bath, Southampton, and Chawton—in brother Edward's big house in Kent, and in brother Henry's London establishments. But the faith of the cult burns as brightly as ever; the worshippers pursue their devotions with fervor and increasing ingenuity.

It is a cozy cult. The six major canonical books may be read through easily by the devout at least once a year. The object of adoration is informally known by her Christian name—something that might surprise and even offend her—while the adorers, with equal familiarity, call themselves "Janeites." But, cozy as the cult is, it is also demanding. Its qualifying standards are high, its catechism only for those profoundly learned in the scripture. Janeites are as much at home at Pemberley and Kellynch Hall and Uppercross, at Mansfield Park and at Hartfield, in the Dashwoods' cottage at Barton, in the Upper and Lower Rooms of Bath, and in the kitchen gardens of Northanger Abbey, as they are in their own houses, apartments, and hall-bedrooms. They can tell you just where Louisa Musgrove fell on the Cobb at Lyme Regis, and how many curs were quarreling over a bone in Highbury's busiest street when Emma Woodhouse looked out from the door of Ford's shop.

—From "Pride and Prejudice." (Bettmann Archive)

Not only do these read. They also write their books have appear past month or so. One of first American edition of Jenkins's wholly excellent "Jane Austen," first publi England in 1938. Another— Austen's Daughter," by Helen ton—is a somewhat fictionalized count of Jane and her family, sented as "a novel." Still another a genuine novel, provocatively en titled "Pemberley Shades," in which D. A. Bonavia-Hunt has essayed the audacious task of writing a sequel to "Pride and Prejudice." And in the fourth of these volumes, "More About Jane Austen," Sheila Kaye-Smith and G. B. Stern—high priestesses of the cult—continue their explorations of Jane Austen's world, their glosses on her text, and their elaborations of her minutiae, which they began in "Speaking of Jane Austen." Let us see how these writers have honored their beloved author.

Miss Jenkins has, I think, provided an ideal introduction to the life Jane Austen lived and the lives she created. More than an introduction, she has given us a critical biography to which we may return profitably long after we are fairly familiar with the ground she covers. Her book, in short, is just about what a book of its kind should be. Her knowledge of Miss Austen's life is as thorough as the available facts permit; she conveys her information with charm, economy, and an exact sense of proportion. Her words bring the numerous members of the Austen family to life in her pages—and surely it must have been one of the pleasantest families in which to live. This domestic circle, the society in which Jane Austen moved, and the houses which she inhabited and visited—ranging from Chawton Cottage to Stoneleigh Abbey—are all clearly portrayed and explained, in a manner that illuminates the genesis and character of her art. But there is no speculation, no filling of blank spots by ingenious guesswork; regarding that mysterious Devonshire romance, for example, Miss Jenkins is content to pass on to us the little that Cassandra Austen told her niece Caroline. Except for this tantalizing hint, she declares, "The blank is complete, the darkness impenetrable."

Knowledge of the life is matched by knowledge of

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kins's critical
e admires with
the writings iout exaggera-
spirit is alw esitate to point
judgment and lapses. We
tion, r her failure to
to her a nature of Jane
can genius has always
d ition, and she has
Miss e impossible; but she
Miss Austen's method
er virtues in a clear
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ption of Miss Austen's
by the novelist herself
a literary-minded neph-
ally read out of context
olly inadequate.

Miss Jenkins is no friend of those who would go hunting for the real originals of Miss Austen's fictional places and characters, and it may be that she is a bit too hard on the hunters, but her firmness is fully justified by the popularity of the misguided practice which she seeks to check. She is justified, too, in her opposition to those "who would like to deduce from Jane Austen's novels the story of her life"; in her argument that there was no such lapse, after the summer of 1802, as many Janeites believe, and in her insistence that the actual order of the novels must be "disconcerting" to certain theories regarding the changing character of the novelist's later work. In fact, Miss Elizabeth Jenkins is almost always justified in what she has to say about Miss Jane Austen.

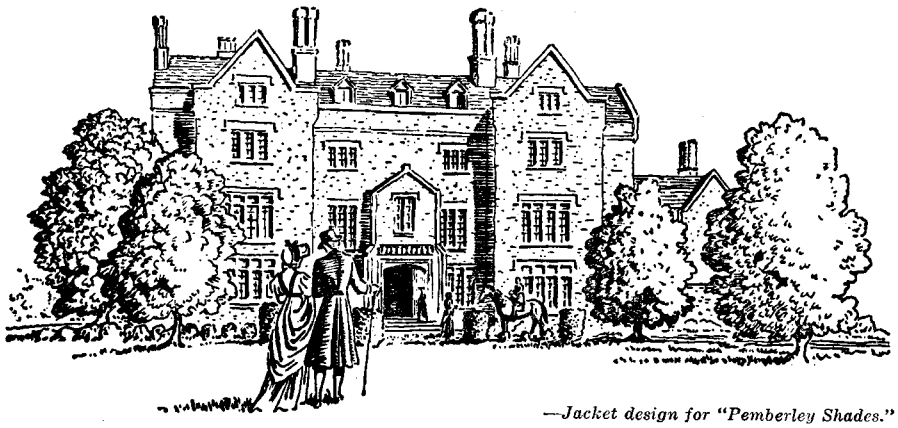
"Parson Austen's Daughter" is hardly a novel, as it is said to be, but a respectable reconstruction of the Austen family history, embracing several generations, written by an author who has obviously saturated her mind and imagination with the literature of her subject. Her greatest debt is to R. W. Chapman, whose learned edition of the "Letters" is a unique and invaluable source of information.

Miss Ashton tells her story pleasantly and easily, often looking at action and characters through the eyes of Cassandra, and sketching in the historical background of the Regency and the Napoleonic wars, but she employs a trick that will, I think, annoy at least as many of Miss Austen's friends as it will delight. This is the trick of reading passages from the novels back into the fictionalized biography, as when she makes the Reverend George Austen speak in the words of Mr. Woodhouse, or when she makes Mrs. James Austen whittle down her husband's intended generosity with the same arguments as those employed by Mrs. John Dashwood in one of the most famous scenes of "Sense and Sensibility."

This device is, of course, intended to indicate the probable sources of some of the novelist's incidents and characters, but it can hardly fail to irritate anyone to whom Mr. Woodhouse, Mrs. Elton, and all their companions are as real as members of the Austen circle. Miss Ashton's hybrid book is plainly a work of love and admiration, but it adds nothing to Jane Austen's portrait as it exists in the avowed biographies, or to our understanding of her art.

Lady Catherine de Bourgh, you will remember, was horrified when she heard that Darcy stood in peril of marrying Elizabeth Bennet. Were "the shades of Pemberley," she demanded, "to be thus polluted?"—by an alliance that would not only unite Darcy and Elizabeth, but also connect him with the infamous Wickham and the shameless Lydia. Miss Bonavia-Hunt has written a most amusing story of Pemberley's pollution; not by any member of the Bennet family, but by a remarkable character with whom Miss Austen was unacquainted. It is Darcy himself who introduces the viper into his ancestral home, with results that are complicated, entertaining, and dramatic. This introduction may be somewhat incredible—for it is hard to believe that Darcy would have tolerated the fellow for an instant—but, once we grant the novelist the license she demands, all goes at a fine pace. Darcy, I should say, has been considerably mellowed by marriage, and Elizabeth has certainly not suffered from it, although she seems to be more in love with her own wit than she once was. I wonder that they were both not more watchful of Georgiana, in view of her youthful fling with Wickham, and am surprised that the author ignores this indiscretion. But one cannot quarrel with Miss Bonavia-Hunt's management of Lady Catherine and her daughter: the first remains offensively in character, while the fate of the second deals a delightful death-blow to all her mother's hopes. It is impossible to guess how well "Pemberley Shades" will please readers unacquainted with the great foundation on whch it stands, but, for those who have "Pride and Prejudice" well in mind, it is very good fun.

So is "More About Jane Austen." Miss Kaye-Smith and Miss Stern have had a fine time attempting to explain their author to the younger generation, speculating on what may have happened to her married heroes and heroines "seven years later," examining the part that letters play in her novels, analyzing her preferences in the matter of good looks, defending her heroines' preoccupation with the business of getting married, placing her in her social environment and in



—*Jacket design for "Pemberley Shades."*

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 338

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 338 will be found in the next issue.

KYV ZCCLJZFE KYRK

KZDVJ KYRK NVIV RIV

SVKKVI KYRE KYFJV

KYRK RIV, YRJ GIFSRSCP

GVIMRUVU RCC RXVJ.

—YFIRTV XIVVCVP.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 337

For precocity some great price is always demanded sooner or later in life. —Ossoli.

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relation to her times, noting the general unobtrusiveness of her fictitious servants, as compared with those of Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson, listing her interesting walking-on parts, and making her materialize, in a somewhat ghostly interview, to speak tartly for herself. And they have given us a fine time, too.

Of course, one cannot read them without engaging in friendly argument—and one would not wish to do so—but most of these arguments are concerned with opinion rather than fact. It is not quite accurate to say, as does Miss Kaye-Smith, that she declined a "royal command" to write a romance concerned with the house of Saxe-Coburg. The Regent's librarian merely suggested the idea, informally. But such a slip is rare, and even those readers who think they know their Jane Austen thoroughly will find instruction as well as entertainment in Miss Kaye-Smith's and Miss Stern's company.

The latter, talking to a young friend, sets out to answer the question: what is it about Jane Austen? It is a question that has baffled and still baffles the lady's most ardent admirers. Miss Stern begins by rhapsodizing. She then goes on to say that Miss Austen is "neither bitter nor boisterous about her people; instead she had irony, tenderness, clear vision, and most of all a gorgeous sense of their absurdity, which is never really exaggerated into more than life-size." She praises her author's poise and judgment, and happily asserts: "the air of Bath is relaxing, but the air of Jane Austen isn't; she's pungent, she's bracing; you're breathing good air while you read Jane, and so you feel well." But the question remains, in Miss Stern's own words, "a real teaser."

Instead of indulging in the folly of trying to answer it here, I shall simply set down a few facts. The world in which Jane Austen lived, and of which she wrote, was a well-organized world, the stability of which was generally taken for granted, despite the earthquake of the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and the conspicuous upsurge of the middle class. Society, on all levels, played the game according to known rules. Rank or money, or both, made the man. Marriage made the woman. The characters in Miss Austen's novels are as exactly informed regarding one another's incomes as are Hollywood's inhabitants today. With a fortune of ten thousand pounds a girl was an heiress, but with luck she could be three thousand short of the

(*Continued on page 34*)

Personal History.

If waning days and gray weather have set you longing for far-away places and interesting strangers, the books reviewed below should be good for what ails you. In the nineteenth-century Manhattan of Edward C. Mack's "Peter Cooper: Citizen of New York," you will meet the lovable, inventive, rags-to-riches founder of the Cooper Union. In the Ozarks, Joseph Nelson will show you eight months in his life as a "Backwoods Teacher." On the Texas prairie, George Sessions Perry will introduce you to a spitfire dowager, "My Granny Van." South of the border, Bertita Harding will tell you about her Mexican girlhood in "Mosaic in the Fountain." Overseas in India, an agricultural missionary reports on his fascinating and useful life in "Sam Higginbottom, Farmer." And in the Balkans, Peter Neagoë recalls his Carpathian childhood in "A Time to Keep."

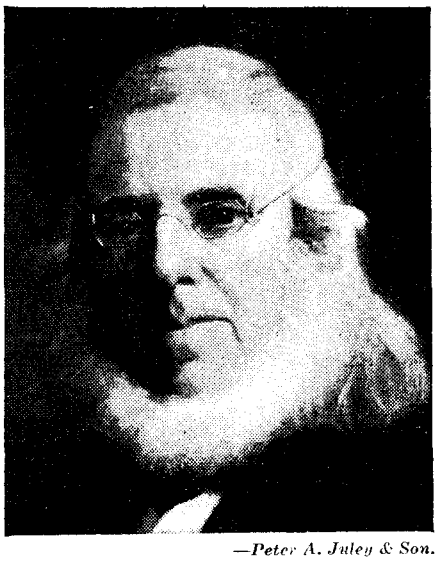
No. 18 in the Hall of Fame

PETER COOPER: CITIZEN OF NEW YORK. By Edward C. Mack. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 432 pp. $5.

By William S. Lynch

INTELLECTUALLY, one of the liveliest spots in New York City is down on Astor Place. It has been there now for ninety years, established by old Peter Cooper in the same year in which John Dewey was born and in which Darwin published his "Origin of Species." Outside New York it is probably most frequently identified as the place where Lincoln delivered the speech supposed to have won him the nomination for President of the United States.

If you are interested in science, you know there exists in the old building with its oval elevator shaft one of the best small engineering schools in America and that Michael Pupin, the physicist, got his early training there. If you are interested in art, you know of its art school and you think of Augustus St. Gaudens as a student.



—*Peter A. Juley & Son.*

Peter Cooper—"first citizen of New York."

The man whose greatest memorial is the Cooper Union and whose presence still pervades its halls died, aged ninety-two, in the early morning hours of April 4, 1883. Until now there has not been a satisfying biography of him. Though he was named (with Robert E. Lee) number eighteen on the original Hall of Fame list, he has not had a full-dress biography.

This life of Peter Cooper by Professor Mack is the definitive one. By arrangement its publication coincides with the ninetieth anniversary of Cooper Union. It is scholarly and complete; by treatment and subject matter, a necessary component of any reasonably crowded shelf of Americana. More than that, it is a highly readable account of a human life at once so simple it seems naive and at the same time so forceful its impact is still being felt on things as amorphous as New York, industry, and education.

Dr. Mack chose a most difficult subject and it is demonstration of far more than ability to handle historical research that he produces an image, vivid and convincingly in character. Peter Cooper's on one level is just the stereotyped story of the poor but honest lad who rose by diligence, good fortune, and ingenuity to the point where he could dispense largess with comfort and a free hand. If that were all there were to Cooper he

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could be written off with the currently fashionable sneer for the philanthropist.

On another level he might have been made to fit the pattern of the rich eccentric, a gadgety old gentleman who fiddled with rotary steam engines and ran for President on the Greenback ticket. Still again, he might be regarded as a rather tiresome and obvious moralist given to spouting platitudes and quoting Pope's "Essay on Man" *ad nauseam.*

Peter Cooper was these things and a lot of others besides—entrepreneur, tinkerer, amateur in politics, first citizen of New York—a kind of expression of America in the first half of the nineteenth century. Still a countryman at heart, he rose with industry and urbanism. With very little formal education himself he felt the practical importance of knowledge in a democracy. To say he was in advance of his time is to dismiss him with an easy cliché. Like truly great men he was of his time. Much of his time is still with us. Dr. Mack has caught all this in his portrayal of the best-loved man in New York.

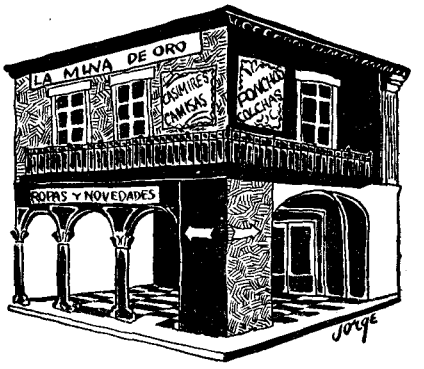
Adventures in Mexico

MOSAIC IN THE FOUNTAIN. By Bertita Harding. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 320 pp. $3.

By Robert Pick

MISS HARDING has, for a long time, been well known for her romances about the late Hapsburg empire and various members of that dynasty as well as a number of Braganzas. To say that she achieved distinction in that field does not mean she proved to be a good novelist. Frankly, some of those volumes of fictionalized court history and of world history as seen from palace rooms and royal antechambers were rather on the Graustarkian side. Therefore my surprise could not have been greater and more pleasant than upon discovering, in Miss Harding's present book of memoirs, not only a woman of astute judgment and of wit, but also a very good writer.

This is the story of her childhood and early adolescence. Born of a Hungarian mother belonging to that country's gentry and a German father of French Huguenot ancestry, Bertita found herself at a tender age in the strangest of lands a Central European child could be removed to: her father, an electrical engineer, had accepted a job in the Mexico of Porfirio Diaz, and to far-away Mexico the family went. But before their departure Bertita's mother was intrusted with a mission that added even more luster to that voyage: the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office, trying to recover certain jewels owned by Francis Joseph's brother, the late Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, had for some time been looking for a reliable person to locate those gems long dispersed in the country of his ill-starred adventure; and they now asked the young engineer's wife to undertake this task. She succeeded in it, and the report she gave to her children of the audience Francis Joseph granted her upon her return to Europe with those imperial heirlooms offers a fine glimpse of the octogenarian monarch.



The images of life in his realm were to recede more and more in the mind of Bertita after the family's second westward crossing. Her experiences in Mexico never ceased to fire her imagination. There were the natives, proud descendants of age-old criollo families as well as the lowly Indians; there was the American kindergarten and then the German school with its fearful principal; there were prize bulls and earthquakes; there was "Uncle Bichteler," a German music teacher who became a member of the household; there was the Sacré Coeur convent in Parras and the religious zeal and confusion life there brought to the girl—that episode makes an altogether engrossing chapter—; and finally there was the colorfulness and the violence of Mexican politics which, to a child coming from the peaceful European continent of the turn of the century, Although there are occasional examples of overwriting in her book, Miss Harding's detailed account of the siege of Monterrey ranks with the very best of stories about Mexican revolts.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

AMERICAN HUMORIST (1889-1946)

After identifying the fourteen well-known literary characters briefly described below, print their names in the spaces just above the description. The initial letters of the characters' names will spell the name of a famous American humorist. Allowing thirty points for the name of the humorist and five points for each character identified, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 16.

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
This tomcat owned and successfully managed a baseball team.
2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Spurned by Hamlet, she went mad and drowned herself.
3. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
On borrowed money, he wooed and won beautiful and wealthy Portia.
4. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Hero of an unfinished mystery story by Charles Dickens.
5. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
A gentleman and a cricket player by day, he was a thief by night.
6. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Queen of the fairies in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."
7. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Marooned on Treasure Island, he dreamed of eating toasted cheese.
8. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
A London flower girl, she learned to speak like a duchess.
9. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Roman god of the sea, he carries a trident, rides a dolphin.
10. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Light she was and like a fairy and her shoes were number nine.
11. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
She wore a scarlet "A" embroidered on her dress.
12. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
He was valet to James Steerforth.
13. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
King Arthur's sword.
14. _ _ _ _ _ _ _
A fellow of infinite jest.

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Texas Prairie Spitfire

MY GRANNY VAN. By George Sessions Perry. New York: Whittlesey House. 223 pp. $2.50.

By Lon Tinkle

IF THE best books are written out of a fusion of knowledge with love, George Perry's "My Granny Van" enters the lists under no handicap. It is obvious that the author knew his extraordinarily wilful grandmother in every reach of her imperious, lonely, tragically possessive yet comically frustrated personality—and that he alone knew her well enough to love her.

But somehow, out of this understanding and this exceptional relationship between fighting grandmother and resistant grandson, George Perry has invoked his comic spirit to create a portrait humorous and tender at the same time, without a trace of solemnity or sentimentality. "My Granny Van," then, has two revelations: one of the indomitable and combative old spitfire, the other of George Perry's rare and almost flawless sense of comedy.

Frontier life prompted the existence of many a woman like Perry's "Granny Van": women who were as resourceful and plucky and hardy as their men, women who took domesticity in their stride and had plenty of energy left over to help the men folks shape the environment. In a young, growing society that provided few institutions to absorb this surplus energy, strong-willed women often turned out to be the raucous "characters" to whose gallery Granny Van belongs. She is, in fact, a Texas prairie version of the high-handed dowager.

—Illustrations from "My Granny Van."

What enlisted Granny Van's interest and attention was conflict. With the usual frontier extrovert nature, she had no sense of private existence, no sense of existence at all until she ran into opposition.

She had a regal contempt for the weaklings who were too craven to offer her any real resistance. Hence, her unexamined loyalty to grandson George, one being who strove mightily, as he says, for at least partial possession of his own soul. And one who hid the whiskey from her.

Their battle, a chucklesome affair on every page, began with George's birth. Granny Van, who had automatically moved in on her son-in-law at the time of her daughter's marriage, took possession of the child on the grounds that the mother and father didn't have enough "gumption" to rear him. She was as ruggedly, or lawlessly, individualistic as any Texas politician. What she respected was power, and chiefly the clever and energetic souls who knew how to get it.

Strangely enough, this vibrant and tough creature, capable of downright meanness, especially to her inferiors, wanted not merely to run the world and everybody—she wanted at the same time to be loved. As Perry unostentatiously, even casually, points out, this unrequited hunger was central in her mode of life. Nothing was left for her but to command.

George Perry did have one handicap, however, in writing this book. Master as he is of every trick in sharpening the point of his material, there's no getting around the fact that the events of Granny Van's life were mostly undramatic. Perry's rich understanding of her thwarted, and typically American, nature insures good comedy. On the whole, though, the portrait is a little thin and perhaps just precisely because the author chose to limit himself only to the comic view.

Founder of Allahabad

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM, FARMER: An Autobiography. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 232 pp. $3.

By Russell Lord

THE founder of Allahabad, India's greatest agriculture institute, tells bluntly and well the story of his life and striving. It is one of the most extraordinary farm stories of our time.

Born in 1874 in the first booming times of Britain's industrial revolution, Sam Higginbottom went with his parents as an emigrant boy "to the West," from the slums of Manchester to a farm in North Wales. From there Sam came alone to Mt. Hermon, an evangelical school and colony established by Dwight L. Moody in rural New England. The Reverend Moody was a shrewd, skilled squire as well as a powerful preacher. "I like to see things grow," he said. Throughout Sam Higginbottom's ten-year struggle to gain a "delayed education" at Amherst and Princeton he increased in conviction that it is more Christian to "feed the needy" than to preach to them; and when at thirty he reached India to begin his forty-year mission at Allahabad his course was set.

In William Carey, who had founded an agricultural society and botanical garden at Calcutta, Sam saw "the greatest Christian since the Apostle Paul"; and he followed with an equal ardor the deeds of Colonel Hudson, superintendent of the Naini Central Gaol. By common-sense farming and hygienic measures, including especially a use of village wastes in the form of composted organic fertilizers, the colonel was increasing field yields threefold or better.

> The contrast between his well-fed prisoners and the lean-limbed natives just outside was a challenge. . . . I began a systematic study of poverty in India and I was appalled by what I learned. . . . More people in India lie down to sleep every night hungry than there are inhabitants in the United States. . . . Most missionaries claimed they were in India simply to save souls which are eternal, to preach nothing save Jesus and Him crucified. I could not see it that way. Jesus pitched full tilt into the social abuses of His day, even emphasizing hunger.

Higginbottom (the name is Saxon) pitched full tilt likewise. He was soon a storm center in church circles and in caste-ridden colonial and native affairs. Returning to America for a quick course in agriculture at Ohio State, he married a stalwart Eastern cousin of Buffalo Bill who was trained

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in nursing and settlement work. From then on the preachy-pious had to think twice before attacking the Higginbottom program in India, for there were two of them now. Side by side, Sam and Ethelinde established hospital dispensaries, took on the care of a leper and a penal colony, and fought at the same time for better care and use of the soil. They loved India and its people; that helped in their "fight for food." Sleek maharajas, with incomes running upwards of fifteen million dollars, began to call on Sam as an agricultural consultant and try to hire him away from his mission. He gave them part time when he could, put up at their places when traveling, and told them straight from the shoulder what they ought to do. The Maharajah of Gwalior commissioned Sam to buy and bring in thirty American tractors; also, to buy a yacht to bring those tractors in on her deck. They couldn't work it that way, not in wartime, but in one way and another they got those tractors on to the farms of Gwalior and to work. Yet when Sam wanted to spread bone-manure on those fields, that couldn't be. "'It will defile the land; the Goddess will be angry.' So once more," Higginbottom concludes, "the dead hand of Hinduism was laid heavily on Christian enterprise."

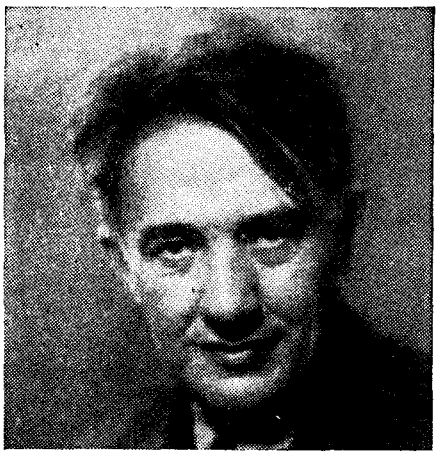
Ghandi, having visited their leper colony and farm demonstrations, tried, as had the Prince of Gwalior, to engage the services of the Higginbottoms in groundline relief of poverty. The conversations and exchanges with the Mahatma here recorded are of special interest—"curiously intimate," as the author remarks,

> yet with differences of opinion always in the background. . . . I had pointed out, for instance, the enormous cost of cow-worship. Mr. Ghandi's comment in his paper, *Young India*, was characteristic of his kindliness and humor. He warned his readers that I did not know much about Hinduism, but to listen when I talked cow because I was then talking about what I did know.

The political reflections on India divided toward the close of the book are confused and down-hearted; but the ending holds the main theme, firm and true: "Do you know of any greater miracle than my life? Allahabad, the only Christian Agricultural College among four hundred million people, now has seven applicants for enrollment for every one that can be admitted."

Russell Lord is editor of The Land *and contributing editor of* The Country Gentleman. *He wrote "The Agrarian Revival," among other books.*

Carpathian Boyhood



Peter Neagoe—"childhood . . . seen as an end in itself."

A TIME TO KEEP. By Peter Neagoë. New York: Coward-McCann. 281 *pp.* $3.

By Irwin T. Sanders

IN "A Time to Keep" Peter Neagoë, a skilled interpreter of village life in Eastern Europe, records with a mellow touch reminiscences of his childhood in a Carpathian village. This is not a run-of-the-mill autobiography: childhood is seen as an end in itself and not as some grim preparation for a successful career, for Mr. Neagoë lets his adulthood intrude as little as possible into what is a charming account of the way the world looked to a boy growing up with a feeling of economic and emotional security. Nor can one compare this with such children's books as "Dobri," by Monica Shannon, or "Son of the Danube," by Boris G. Petroff, since these describe a Balkan childhood for young readers rather than for the mature.

"A Time to Keep" is an idyl with a transparent style through which the rural characters who figured most in Mr. Neagoë's early years are vividly seen. In Uncle Gherazim, the leading farmer of the village, the author makes felicitous use of the peasant idiom, revealing the dignity and folk wisdom of peasant society.

But there is another value to the publication of this book at the present time. Americans, whether they will it or not, are becoming increasingly aware that Balkan affairs are American affairs. In this connection, this book can be likened to a documentary film depicting in scene after scene Balkan village life which even today has many of the same traits noted by Mr. Neagoë before World War I. Here in the village are the pillars of society, or the intelligentsia, who manage the affairs of such local institutions as the government, the church, and the school. Economic affairs a generation ago were vested chiefly in the hands of the wealthier peasants, who sold hay to those running short, loaned money to a neighbor in need, and in other ways served as a cushion for the village economy. Mr. Neagoë's father was the notary or village clerk who executed all official documents and represented the outside government; so little Peter basked in the limelight of the educated class separated from the peasant by a barrier of learning and social distinction. Peter's father, however, respected the peasant, chiefly because like them he was devoted to the land.

Much insight is gained into the role of religion through the excellent characterization of two priests, Protopope Rasu, who is Peter's uncle by marriage, and Popa Radu, the local priest. They ministered as much by their robustness and zest for life as they did by their fervor for the Lord, and the broad attention they were able to give to non-ecclesiastical affairs indicated how perfunctory their churchly duties really were. Nevertheless, they were always on hand to officiate at times of crisis and thus help the fatalistic peasant accept more willingly the hardness of his lot. And his lot was hard, as Mr. Neagoë recognizes:

> Once on a cold winter day a man came with a load of wood. We had just come out in the yard, Irina and I, when he arrived. As the man was lifting the wood off the horse's back, mother came out. She walked over to him. She touched the horse and said, "The poor, tired animal." The man carried the bundles of wood under the shed to the woodpile. When he came back he answered mother. "He is not poorer and not more tired than I am, madam. The Lord knows it." After that I pitied a poor peasant almost as much as his horse.

But even such a difficult lot had its compensations. The joys of summer with the flocks in mountain pastures, the harvesting of grapes, the gossip flowing freely at spinning bees, holiday feasts, skilful telling of legends—these and many more traditional acts are all permeated by a closeness to nature approaching pantheism.

Any reader, therefore, will find the book a delightful and refreshing experience not because it affords escape from present realities but because it helps him lay hold of something that is richly satisfying, truly "a time to keep."

Irwin T. Sanders, a member of the faculty of the University of Kentucky, is author of "Balkan Village."

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Eight Grades Plus the Pre-Primer

BACKWOODS TEACHER. By Joseph Nelson. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 288 pp. $3.

By HARRIETTE SIMPSON ARNOW

THOUSANDS of pages of history, both straight and fictionized, have been written about the backwoodsmen who, even in the earliest days of our country, refused to live in the comparative safety of the small settlements bordering the coast but went out, each to his separate holding, and farmed and hunted alone. Descendants of such men were great fighters in all our early wars; always they spearheaded the trek westward, sometimes as settlers but often as hunters, explorers, and Indian-fighters.

Today, the direct descendants of these same English-Scotch-Irish Americans crossed with Huguenot, living in the Southern Appalachians and the Ozarks, inheriting the same characteristics as their honored ancestors, speaking much the same language, singing the same hymns, playing the same games, are usually referred to as hill-billies and serve endlessly as material for comic strips, Grade-B motion pictures with a humorous angle, and the kind of jokes that appeal to people who confuse wisdom with "American know-how."

However, Joseph Nelson's story of his work as a rural teacher in a backwoods Ozark community is a happy exception to this rule. Mr. Nelson neither distorts nor ridicules; he sees the world around him not with the eyes of a social worker or the hasty note-taking glances of a rubberneck writer in search of storybook material, but as one man looking at other men. Soon he grew to think of his patrons as his "contemporary ancestors," and says of them: "Spiritually, morally, mentally, the people were about like people anywhere: bright, dull, retarded, 'queer.' The Big Piney folks had as much knowledge as the people anywhere; it was just of a different kind."

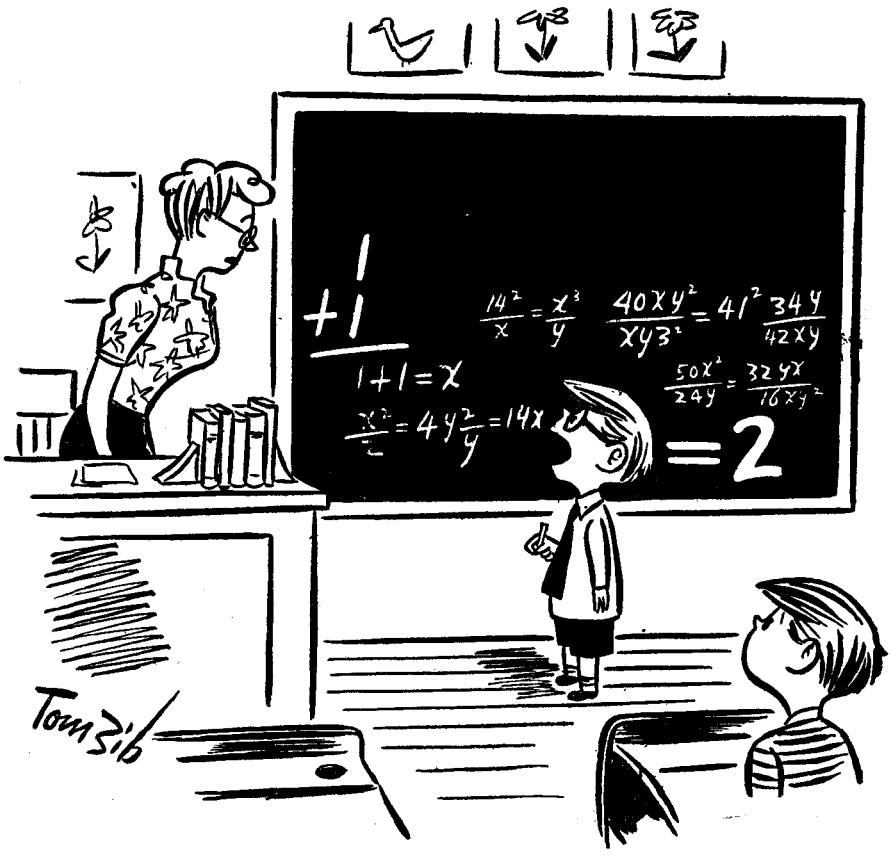
Mr. Nelson makes his reader realize this, and at the same time produces an entertaining story of how it was to teach eight grades plus the pre-primer in one room during the latter part of the Depression when the old ways were giving way to new that brought graveled roads, WPA, and AAA. The book covers only the one eight months' term, yet one feels that the author must have spent years in such a community to have gained so much understanding, to reproduce the backwoods dialect so truly, and write with clarity and conviction of life through all the seasons—molasses-making, fall plowing, the early "spring" when it rained and snowed and froze but it was spring for the groundhog had not seen his shadow, and the real spring when even a jay bird sang.

He tells enough of phonology, semantics, superstitions, religions, social customs, and farming practices as governed by the zodiac to make "Backwoods Teacher" an interesting and important work for students of Americana. Yet seldom do his descriptions of Ozark customs interfere with the story, and never do they submerge the characters; instead such strange practices as telling the bees of a death in the family, or carrying a boar's tusk to protect a male from dire consequences that might result from the mumps going down instead of up, seem quite ordinary and fitting when coupled with the people who perform them.

Mr. Nelson, who seems to have an almost instinctive eye for the foibles of mankind, including those of himself, never made the mistake that so many others have made—the mistaking of a simplicity in culture for simplicity in character. The Big Piney folks were never simple; Sister Viny, the religious lady of light virtue in Dollar Hollar, could exhaust the powers of half a dozen psychiatrists. Brother Helms is a still more enchanting blend of Machiavelli, Abraham Lincoln, Shylock, and Jeeter Lester; he was forever scheming and one of the funniest passages in the book is an account of how he finagled himself into plowing the teacher's garden when he had planned only to teach the teacher. Other characters will arouse the reader's compassionate anger: the Nolans, who, because they were black, could never be allowed to learn to read; the Tibos, who worked in the cedar swamps; Martha, who began as a pupil and ended as a wife, and Clyde, who got religion.

Not the least of the characters are the Nelsons themselves; we hear a lot about the author's wonderful wife, Sally, and are always with the author when he is teaching or performing some one of his many duties such as decorating the schoolhouse for the box supper or taking his cow to the "brute," but so skilfully are they kept in the background that after finishing the book it is hard to believe it was told in the first person.

Harriette Simpson Arnow is author of "Hunter's Horn," a novel dealing with Kentucky mountain life.



"What's the difference *how* I did it? It's right, isn't it?"

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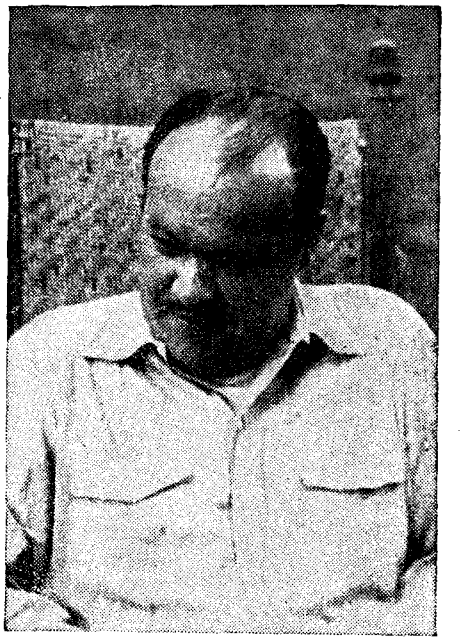
Fiction. *The writers of war novels have taken a long time to get around to the fraction of our Army who went over the hill and stayed there. In "See If He Wins," Richard Spong, a Government investigator, tells the grim and hair-raising story of the courageous soldier who fled to Paris to become a black-market operator. It leads the reader to wonder why there were not more of them. From the other side of the world comes Sudhin N. Ghose's "And Gazelles Leaping," in which this distinguished, elderly Indian tenderly recreates his boyhood on the Ganges. The book has the fascination of an alien civilization and the universality of childhood memories. Among the scattering of late-season books, the past and the present meet nostalgically in Gwen Davenport's Southern novel, "Family Fortunes," and Ethel Wilson's partly factual portrait of a hundred-year-old lady, "The Innocent Traveler."*



Richard Spong—"sharpness . . . verve [and] the shadow of existentialism."

One Segment of GI Life in Paris

SEE IF HE WINS. By Richard Spong. *New York: William Sloane Assoc.* 273 pp. $3.

By Hollis Alpert

RICHARD SPONG'S novel of an American GI who deserts his front-line unit while on leave in Paris and who then gets caught up in a series of black-market escapades manages to be a curious mixture of the credible and the incredible. If the author's intention had been merely to fashion a yarn of suspense and violence in a relatively exotic atmosphere there would be little to complain about. But the assumption is fairly clear that he wanted quite seriously to delve into the motivations that could lead an American soldier to cut himself off from what was, after all, the relatively protective hand of the Army, and also from the more or less tangible loyalties and responsibilities that went with being part of an outfit that faced a common danger. Mr. Spong could hardly have chosen a less likely deserter type than Tom Sword for his chief character.

That there were a large number of deserters who lived a hazardous and haphazard life within the black-market fringe of Paris is certainly true enough. A lot of them were ferreted out by the Army's CID agents, who often enough found them holed up in sordid rooms or living with prostitutes or roaming fearfully through the shabbily elegant city of that winter and spring of 1945. Some became virtual criminals or tied up with French-American gangs that were a continual menace to the Army supply lines. They were aided and abetted by all too many who stayed within their Army units while trading PX commodities, rations, and gasoline for the inflated French currency.

But Tom Sword, as portrayed by Mr. Spong, was hardly the type to sell even his weekly PX rations. He is described as a relatively clean-cut Dartmouth graduate who is haunted by some inner weakness, some vaguely defined guilt that is worked out in too much drinking. It wasn't fear or cowardice which kept him from returning to his tank-destroyer battalion after getting drunk and spending the last night of his leave with a prostitute in Pigalle. He was a "good" soldier, had fought well, had taken a certain pride in the way he had handled his combat job. It is quite mystifying to see him choosing not to rejoin his tank-destroyer battalion and taking what was generally a mild punishment for a few hours' or a few days' overstay of a leave. The notorious disciplinary camps were reserved for more serious lapses and more hardened offenders.

For the number of GI's who drank themselves silly while whoring in that garish Montmartre section known as Pigalle was large indeed. Some of them, like Tom Sword, undoubtedly woke up after a heavy night to find that the trucks which had carried them on three-day passes to the then dismal city of light had already headed back to the combat zones. But with so much available Army transport in the huge motor park near the Invalides it was never a problem finding one's way back. The thing was, Tom Sword didn't want to go back.

And you gather, after awhile, that what he wanted was a certain new kind of freedom; he wanted to be a "responsible man," free and capable of making his own choices. (The shadow of existentialism hangs heavy here.) But there is a peculiar irrationality about Tom's choosing the venal milieu he does for his freedom, and about his ganging up with Spud, the Negro soldier, and Buchain, the black marketeer, for the thievery he then engages in. Even the latter two seem a little too "nice" for the sort of thing they do.

The better and more authentic part of the novel deals vividly with the actual method of black-market operation. Mr. Spong, who was a CID operative himself, knows this well.

He has added the usual GI-French girl romance to his story, but there is undeniable pathos in the way Solange, the seventeen-year-old girl, calmly enters into a hotel-room liaison with Tom, with soap and cigarettes as a dividend.

It is unfortunate that the book has had to be entirely focused about Tom, who is consistently out of place in the situations the author has chosen for him. This flaw seriously disturbs what might otherwise have been a realistic picture of one segment of GI life in Paris during the latter phases of the war, for, beyond this, Mr. Spong has written his first novel with considerable sharpness and verve.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Rhubarb. 2. Ophelia. 3. Bassanio. 4. Edwin Drood. 5. Raffles. 6. Titania. 7. Ben Gunn. 8. Eliza Doolittle. 9. Neptune. 10. Clementine. 11. Hester Prynne. 12. Littimer. 13. Excalibur. 14. Yorick. AMERICAN HUMORIST: Robert Benchley.

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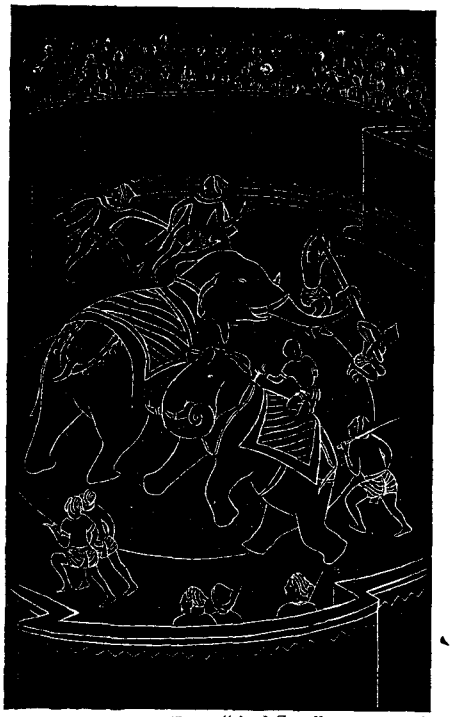
Fairyland on the Ganges

AND GAZELLES LEAPING. By Sudhin N. Ghose. New York: The Macmillan Co. 238 pp. $3.50.

By Joseph G. Hitrec

IN THE welter of childhood stories cropping up on publishers' lists with such regularity, running to Freudian hindsight, unleavened realism, and not infrequently to social pamphleteering, it is a change to come across one that breathes the mystery and naive wonder of those years without for a moment seeming to languish on it. Sudhin N. Ghose's "And Gazelles Leaping" is a winsome recapture of a childhood spent on a Ganges canal in a Calcutta suburb at the turn of the century—a fascinating time by all accounts, for writing of it almost fifty years later the author has no difficulty at all in refurbishing its golden hours, its sun-specked landscape and laughter. That may be so because he is an Indian, a Bengali at that, and because in his country childhood is a pastel blend of things that are and those that have been, of half-believed legends and animals roaming, and grown-ups themselves uttering and understanding the language of children.

The pains of awakening on Rani Nilmani's estate in Calcutta were no different from those in any other Indian village and Mr. Ghose does not strive to make them so. There was the kindergarten of Sister Svenska with its school building, to which the children of the estate came each day, and there was a small bazaar in its midst and some undistinguished huts belonging to distinguished people—the washerwoman, Moti Did; Cha-Cha, the wheelwright; Peon Dada, the mail carrier. The city of Calcutta, ever spreading and expanding, had already engulfed the estate but could not swallow it, since it was private property bequeathed in trust. Perhaps that was the reason why it became a sanctuary for those willing to respect its peace and unwritten codes, and why it abounded in animals. Of these there was quite a collection: the pint-sized elephant, Mohan, bearing his cross of arrested development with a shyness that was all but human; the duck of the girl Seeta; the goat of Mazdoor, called White Beauty; the monkey, the white crow, the pink mice, the does, and innumerable birds. Each child had a pet and brought him to school, but when young Ghose befriended Mohan and the animal began to distract the



—*From "And Gazelles Leaping."*

class by clowning at the window, Sister Svenska decided ruefully to draw the line somewhere. For the rest, the air was thick with mythology and stories of a circus nearby; ascetics and revolutionaries came and went. Later hoodlum gangs began to prowl the neighborhood and Ghose engaged in a private war with them, emerging battered but triumphant. Any moral to be drawn from this and other upheavals was at all times readily expounded by the adults, Cha-Cha, Moti Didi, and Peon Dada, whose sly and yet profound wisdom was the kind that India imparts to all her children, whatever their age. Towards the end "progress" and unscrupulous land speculators nearly liquidated the estate. The vitality and righteous wrath of its inmates, and the undefinable quality of plain good luck that shines on innocents everywhere saved the day most aptly.

Mr. Ghose has fashioned his form on his subject matter. His writing is artless and episodic, but permeated with a lively sense of the droll. He has loved his childhood and does not wish to clutter it with "psychology" at this late stage. He does not pose or justify. There is in his memories the light touch, the cheerful disregard for the norms of perspective and composition that lie on a Rajput water color, and also its charming literalness. At their best these reminiscences are limpid refractions of an experience that every grown-up will in some degree recognize as his own, shimmer though they may in the unaccustomed light of a quaint setting.

Fiction Notes

THE INNOCENT TRAVELLER, by Ethel Wilson. Macmillan. $2.75. Miss Wilson lovingly presents the portrait of a lady living long and with ceaseless vigor. One hundred years is the time alloted Topaz Edgeworth for sojourn on this planet. She takes joy in it, enriching her spinster state with sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, and generation after generation of collaterals. From an English Victorian childhood to an excessive venerability in Western Canada her scope increases while her personality grows proportionately more colorful. A splendid old party results. Invulnerable, mannered, inordinately loquacious, rich in importance, ever ready to do battle, eager for callers or a new idea, this grande dame makes marvelous material. Gladstone, Matthew Arnold, Kipling, and Queen Mary strew her path with prestige. Once she meets Otis Skinner, who, in his shining person, forever cleanses the theatre of evil.

Based partly on fact, padded with inventive fiction, "The Innocent Traveller" is gentle, engaging, quietly wise, and nostalgic without being dated.

—Catherine Meredith Brown.

FAMILY FORTUNES, by Gwen Davenport. Doubleday. $3. In "Family Fortunes" Gwen Davenport tells the story of an impoverished First Family of Kentucky whose ancestral mansion, tumbling about their ears, is publicized, glorified, and metamorphosed from simply the house where generations of Brackenwoods have lived into a state shrine, The Greatest Old Kentucky Home. No one could have been more astonished than the Brackenwoods themselves at the role into which they and the house were cast.

Mrs. Davenport displays her considerable gifts of satire and sly wit in some really superb caricaturing of antiquamaniacs and devotees of local color. I haven't read anything much funnier than her description of the visitation of the Pioneer Daughters in their little paper coonskin hats; or of Mr. Peter Faunce, the Wandering Minstrel, and his dulcimer; or of Clem Pettigrew, the author who was more homespun than linsey-woolsey and who would have died for dear ol' Narruh Gap, where he was bohn, suh, but who preferred to live in Hollywood. She has a fine time with these characters, and so does the reader. Once it gets past its initial doldrums, "Family Fortunes" is a thoroughly de-

(*Continued on page* 32)

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Antidote for Dial-Hopping

GEORGE KENT

FOR the past three years, people who live in and around New York have been listening to something that seems almost too good to be true: a radio station with good manners. Instead of clattering into your privacy with a strident "Buy this. . . . Buy that. . . . It's the biggest. . . . It's the newest. . . ," WABF tiptoes into your living room with artfully chosen programs of classic music and then steps back to let you enjoy them in serenity. There are commercials, of course, but they are whispered almost apologetically, rarely more than a sentence or two, and stripped of adjectives and high pressure. Definitely tabu are the theme song, the jingling hosannas in praise of soap, cigarettes, and cereals. WABF does not forget it is a guest in your home, and behaves as becomes one.

The other day a Princeton University professor wrote the station a letter saying: "Anything as good as WABF must need money. Enclosed is my check for $14."

The professor was wrong. WABF is making money. And it is growing. Engineering surveys, now completed, have cleared the way for the establishment soon of the six-station FM Metropolitan Network to link Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, New Haven, and Boston. Eventually, it will hook up with other FM chains, particularly those being operated without a profit by educational groups and institutions. By 1952 the programs of WABF should be audible from coast to coast and the new network will have become a great force for the improvement of radio.

When ordinary folks, like you and me, get mad at what the loudspeaker is spewing into our homes, all we do is turn it off. Ira A. Hirschmann, a dark, curly-topped man of forty-eight, also turned it off. But then he did more. He went out and started Station WABF, to broadcast, on FM only, good music, presented with tact and courtesy. He didn't have quite enough money but, being the type who can sell hatpins to porcupines, he persuaded a few men with money to join him.

Hirschmann had had some experience with radio. Back in the Twenties, as an employee of Bamberger's—a Newark, N. J., department store—he helped found Station WOR, now key station of the Mutual Network. There he had had the distinction of putting the New York Philharmonic on the air for the first time. This was less showmanship than the gesture of a man who loved music sincerely and numbered Artur Schnabel and Arturo Toscanini among his close friends.

With the founding of WABF, split-second programming was abolished. "Music's the thing," Hirschmann said, "not the clock." On conventional stations, long musical compositions are often cut so that they will end on the hour or half hour. Hirschmann laid down the rule that all numbers were to be played through without interruption, regardless of time. (Usually there are no pauses between movements—certainly no commercials.) In a concert hall people do not keep looking at their watches; why in radio? Compositions on WABF wind up minutes after the hour, sometimes as many as seventeen minutes. Once a quartet was on the air when a cellist snapped a string on his instrument. On any other station, committed to a rigid advertising time-table, this would have been a calamity. On WABF the announcer simply informed the audience what had happened and a few minutes later the concert resumed. Characteristically, it started not from where it left off but from the beginning.

WABF does not play jazz. Occasionally, in historical surveys of the American musical scene, there will be hot numbers, but at no other times. Last year an attempt was made to include a little jazz as a regular feature. But the listeners spoke up vehemently. The nays outweighed the yeas by ten to one. For much the same reason there is no newscast. Hirschmann feels that it becomes unpleasantly repetitious besides interrupting the flow of music. There is only one exception: a weekly fifteen-minute report from the United Nations.

Commercials, Hirschmann decided, were a necessary evil if the station was to become self-supporting. But he felt that they should be edited, spaced, and delivered in a normal speaking voice. To make sure that the music remained more important than advertising, he gave the program department dominance over the sales people. Theirs is always the last word. He also gave them a mouthpiece in the monthly *Program Magazine*, which, in addition to listing all compositions, publishes editorials and articles on music for a paid-up circulation of 25,000.

Presented one day with a long, high-pressure blurb for a record company that had leased six hours on his station, Hirschmann reduced it to a lean six paragraphs that told the story without frills or offensive insistence. The advertising agency that had prepared it was in a tizzy. But the sponsor, oddly enough, was enthusiastic. He thought it fitted better. "It married the music," he said.

Normally, commercials are given on the hour and half-hour, and never take more than two minutes for every sixty minutes of music, much less time than on most other stations. If a long composition is being played, the announcement waits until it is over. In the case of the "Requiem" of Berlioz, for example, there will be none for nearly two hours.

WABF announcers are forbidden, under pain of dismissal, to *punch* the advertising message into the mike. They may recommend, they may suggest; they may not implore, wheedle, or bully the listeners. They are not permitted to use their position, as do disc jockeys, to build up a personality. It gets in the way of the music, Hirschmann believes. "The radio station is merely the fortunate intermediary between Beethoven and the public," he said. "The broadcaster is a guest in a home and he must talk as he would talk sitting in a friend's living room." In the past three years two WABF announcers have been discharged for violating this rule.

WABF is estimated to have close to

(Continued on page 28)

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What SRL Reviewers Are Giving for Christmas*

SARA HENDERSON HAY	The Mature Mind (H. A. Overstreet)	The Show of Violence (Fredric Wertham)	The Stumbling Stone (Aubrey Menen)	This I Remember (Eleanor Roosevelt)	Cry, the Beloved Country (Alan Paton)
DON HOLLENBECK	China Shakes the World (Jack Belden)	The Case of General Yamashita (A. Frank Reel)	This I Remember (Eleanor Roosevelt)	The Egyptian (Mika Waltari)	Live with Lightning (Mitchell Wilson)
MILTON R. KONVITZ	The Vital Center (Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.)	A Dreamer's Journey (Morris R. Cohen)	Goethe the Poet (Karl Vietor)	The Education of Free Men (Horace M. Kallen)	Trade Unions in the New Society (Harold J. Laski)
RICHARD E. LAUTERBACH	China Shakes the World (Jack Belden)	The United States and the Soviet Union (American Friends Service Committee)	Art & Life in America (Oliver W. Larkin)	See If He Wins (Richard Spong)	The Big Wheel (John Brooks)
JOSEPHINE LAWRENCE†	The Plum Tree (Mary Ellen Chase)	The Blue Field (John Moore)	Women are Here to Stay (Agnes Rogers)	Father of the Bride (Edward Streeter)	A Guide to Confident Living (Norman Vincent Peale)
ASHLEY MONTAGU	Male and Female (Margaret Mead)	Influence of the Potato on the Course of Irish History (Redcliffe N. Salaman)	Profile Art (R. L. Megroz)	The Meaning of Evolution (G. G. Simpson)	Killers of the Dream (Lillian Smith)
DALE L. MORGAN	The Evening and the Morning (Virginia Sorensen)	The Track of the Cat (Walter Van Tilburg Clark)	Their Finest Hour (Winston S. Churchill)	The Peaceable Kingdom (Ardyth Kennelly)	Nineteen Eighty-Four (George Orwell)
GORHAM MUNSON†	Strange Life of Ivan Osokin (P. D. Ouspensky)	I Wanted to Write (Kenneth Roberts)	The Best Short Stories from Collier's (Edited by Barthold Fles)	The Wind of Time (Rolfe Humphries)	
JOHN PFEIFFER	Cybernetics (Norbert Wiener)	Unresting Cells (Ralph W. Gerard)	The Story of Maps (Lloyd A. Brown)	Fear, War, and the Bomb (P. M. S. Blackett)	Mirror for Man (Clyde Kluckhohn)
DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE	The Complete Poems of Robert Frost	This Far and No Farther (Rumer Godden)	The Diary of Philip Vickers Fithian	The Life of St. Francis of Assisi (Luigi Salvatorelli)	Field Guide to the Birds (Roger Tory Peterson)
ROBERT PICK	Rembrandt (Jakob Rosenberg)	The Heat of the Day (Elizabeth Bowen)	The Golden Apples (Eudora Welty)	The Golden Warrior (Hope Muntz)	Under the Volcano (Malcolm Lowry)
BEN RAY REDMAN	The Bhagavadgita (Trans. by S. Radharkrishnan)	Matthew Arnold (Lionel Trilling)	Erasmus's Praise of Folly (Trans. by Leonard F. Dean)	Elizabethan Lyrics (Edited by Norman Ault)	John Aubrey's Brief Lives (Edited by Anthony Powell)
WELLINGTON ROE	This I Remember (Eleanor Roosevelt)	The Mudlark (Theodore Bonnet)	The U. A. W. and Walter Reuther (Irving Howe and B. J. Widick)	World Revolution in the Cause of Peace (Lionel Curtis)	Father of the Bride (Edward Streeter)
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*Part I of this list ran in last week's issue.
† Miss Lawrence and Mr. Munson both suggested American Booksellers Association Give-a-Book Certificates as excellent gifts for readers of any taste.

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Does Anyone Know Pinkie?

THIS is the story of Tami Taguchi and Orville Pohman, both of them veterans of World War II. Tami Taguchi is a Japanese from Yokohama, Orville Pohman an American from—?

Well, that's the point of the story; no one seems to know. Maybe it is California, but it could be Pennsylvania or Louisiana or one of the Carolinas or a dozen other states. All Tami is sure of is that it is a very large state and that the spelling ends with an "ia" or an "a." But what Tami is certain of is that he would be the happiest young man in this world if he could see "Pinkie" Pohman again —or even if he could hear from him or about him.

Perhaps I should explain how it was I happened to learn of the strange and wonderful friendship that existed between these two young men who had been on opposite sides only a few months before they met. During my recent visit to Japan, I had dinner in Yokohama with a group of about fifty students and veterans who were active in the pro-democratic movement and who realized that the only permanent cure for Japanese nationalism and militarism was world citizenship. Some of the keenest and most knowledgeable questions came from a young man who spoke English extremely well, though with an accent at once unusual and charming —Japanese mixed with Australian cockney. I later learned that the Australian part of the accent came from his father, who had worked there in his youth.

The young man's name was Tami Taguchi. As the evening wore on, most of the conversation was steered through him. The students and their advisor, Professor Jean Ohsava, discussed the progress of world-government groups in America and elsewhere. They were well informed about the activities of the United Nations, had studied the Charter carefully, and were interested in the possibility of a U. N. revision conference, and in plans advanced in England for a People's World Constitutional Convention.

Before I left, the group demonstrated its world-mindedness by singing American, English, and French songs. I was 12,000 miles away from home, but when they sang "Auld Lang Syne" at the end of the evening I couldn't have been more nostalgic than if I had come across a peanut-and-popcorn stand in the middle of the Sahara.

This was something I wanted Americans to hear for themselves, and so I managed to have the entire group come up to Tokyo for a recording that I could use in my radio report back home. Led by Professor Ohsava, the students turned up well ahead of time in the studios of Radio Tokyo, which is to Japan pretty much what a combination of CBS, NBC, ABC, and Mutual are to the United States. While the recording of their songs was in progress, Tami Taguchi handed me a note on which he had hastily scrawled the following:

> Please, sir, if it would be possible for me to sing "Show Me the Way to Go Home," it would be very much appreciated by me. Maybe Private Pohman will hear me, or maybe some people in America they will hear me and they will know where he is, Pinkie, my friend.

I scribbled a line at the bottom of the note, telling Tami to please sing his song but to be sure to explain who Private Pohman was and why he wanted to hear from him. I sent another note into the control room to alert the engineers.

I had heard "Show Me the Way to Go Home" sung many times and under a wide variety of circumstances, but never more eloquently or with more originality than by young Tami Taguchi. His voice was somewhat high-pitched and it wavered and sometimes you couldn't tell the words for the accent, but there was no mistaking the fact that he sang it as though it were the only song in the world. While still in front of the microphone, Tami went on to tell the story of his meeting with Pinkie. Here, as well as I can remember it, is that story in his own words:

"This song I have just sung, 'Show Me the Way to Go Home,' was taught to me by a very wonderful and great friend, Private Orville Pohman. Everyone called him 'Pinkie' because his face was so red.

"When I met 'Pinkie' it was Christmas Eve 1945. I think it was maybe two or three o'clock in the morning. It was snowing outside. I was sleeping. Suddenly, there was a great noise. I jumped up from my bed. Someone was pounding on the door. Quickly I realized what was happening. The Americans were coming to kill me—just like my officers in the war said they would if Japan lost the war. At first I wanted to hide but I knew they would find me anyway and they would think I was a coward. I went downstairs to open the door. I was so frightened I forgot to put any clothes on over my underwear. All this time the pounding on the door kept getting louder.

"When I opened the door I knew that what I was afraid of was true. There was an American soldier standing there. It was the first time I had ever seen an American that close. He was a giant, just like they had said all Americans were. I knew he could crush me with his bare hands. I looked at him and didn't say anything. I was trembling with fear. He looked at me and didn't say anything either. Then he smiled and I thought he was laughing to himself because I looked so funny standing there in my underwear. Then I guess he thought I was trembling from the cold, because he took off his big overcoat and put it around me. It was so heavy and I was so surprised that I could hardly stand up inside it. But

Atomic Age Fables

XXIV: The Three Monkeys

ONE night the three holy monkeys spoke to one another.

See No Evil said:
I hear it.

Hear No Evil said:
I see it.

And Speak No Evil nodded.

—J. S.

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I knew right then that this American giant had not come to kill me, for he smiled again and said:

"'Anybody here speak English?'"

"I said, 'Oh yes, I speak English. My father lived in Australia and he taught me to speak and read.'"

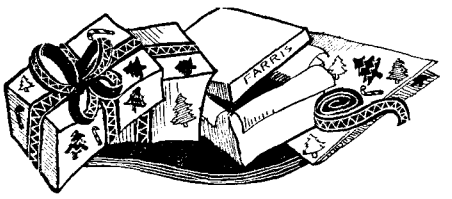
"Then he said, 'Thank God. I'm lost. My jeep went dead about a mile from here and I'm trying to find my way back to my barracks. It's somewhere around here, but I'll be darned if I can find it without any lights.'"

"I knew where the barracks were but it was about two miles away and I knew that even I could not find it in the dark. So I said to the American giant that maybe he should wait until morning and that to please come inside and spend the night. At first he was afraid he should not do it because he didn't want to disturb my family, but I told him my parents were not living, and that no one would be disturbed.

"When he came inside I went to get him some sake to warm him, and he drank the sake. He said it was good and asked for more. I gave him the bottle and I think he liked it very much. He began to talk and to tell me about himself. He said his name was Orville Pohman, private first class, but that all his friends called him 'Pinkie,' and he grinned and pointed to his face. It was redder than any face I had ever seen in my life. And as he drank sake to warm up, it seemed to me it kept getting redder and more wonderful all the time.

"We talked for hours before we went to sleep. I was the first Japanese he had met who spoke English, and he asked me many questions about the Japanese people and about the Army. I was seventeen at the time and had not yet been in active service, but I had completed my training, and I could tell him about the strange way Japanese boys were trained for war—how the officers tried to make us hard and brutal by beating us and then ordering one of us to stand still while they made his best friend hit him with the broad side of a sword. It was a very bad thing to do, but it was supposed to make you forget your kindness and think only about how to kill.

"Mr. Pohman—that is what I kept calling him for a long time even though he told me to call him Pinkie—Mr. Pohman said that the best soldiers were those who understood why they were fighting and who knew that killing was bad but that there were things more important than killing and dying. He told me about Pearl Harbor and about Nazi Germany and about what happened when people



were made to kill the kindness inside them and to hurt their friends, as my officers had made me do during my training.

"Then we began talking about other things—about baseball and sports and music. I always have liked baseball more than other sports and after a little more sake, because it was cold in the house, we were showing each other how to slide under the throw, and then we began to teach each other songs. One song he taught me that night he said he had been singing to himself after he had lost his way when his jeep broke down. It was 'Show Me the Way to Go Home.' He said it was one of the most wonderful American songs to sing with your friends, especially when you warmed yourself up with a drink like sake. I think it was while he was singing 'Show Me the Way to Go Home' that I finally fell asleep.

"Mr. Pohman—I mean Pinkie—and I became very good friends. He was eight years older than I was and he helped me in many things. He brought me clothes and had them shortened so that they would fit. He gave me food at a time when Japanese had very little to eat. He gave me American books to read, history books and books about the American people. He came to see me three or four times a week and I felt that he had adopted me like I was his son.

"What I remember more than anything else about Pinkie was what he used to tell me about America and the American people. I would read the books he gave me and we would talk about them. I remember so well the stories he told about Abraham Lincoln and what he said about democracy—to the people, of the people, for the people, from the people, and by the people.

"Three months after the Christmas Eve I first met Pinkie he came to see me and he said he had something sad to tell me. He had been told that his long period of service in the Army was over and that he could now go home to see his family again. He had to leave in a hurry, right away, right then. I was very glad that he could go home but inside I felt like the time I learned that my mother was very sick and I might never see her again.

"Two days after Pinkie left I realized that I had been so sad and mixed up that I had forgotten to write down for him my address, and he had forgotten to give me his address. An address in Japan is very complicated; there are many things to put down, and mail is not easy to receive if the address is not right, and when the mail is lost, sometimes it is never returned to the man who sent it.

"It is now four years since I last saw Pinkie. I have had no letters from him. I am worried about him. I know he is worried about me. I have sent letters to him in care of the United States Army in Washington but I have heard nothing. I hope he is all right and his family is all right. That is all I want to know.

"Pinkie—maybe you are listening to this broadcast. That's why I sang 'Show Me the Way to Go Home.' Maybe someone you know may be listening. Please write down my address now. I've been able to get a simple address. The American Army has been good to me and says it will deliver mail to me with an American Army address like the one you used to have. This is the new address. Pinkie: It's 8th Motor Pool, APO 503, Yokohama.

"That's all, Pinkie. I want to come to America some day to see all the things you used to tell me about. But most of all, right now, I want to hear from you. It's been four years."

* * *

The broadcast went over the air, but the reception was so poor that they had to cut almost all of Tami's story about Pinkie. Consequently, Pinkie's whereabouts is still a mystery. And that is why I thought it might be a good idea to put the story into print.

* * *

Many times in Japan during my recent trip I wondered about the democratization program being carried out under the auspices or sponsorship of the American Occupation. I wondered how much of it would stick. I wondered how much of it the Japanese are really digesting and making part of their working political philosophy, and how much of it was being worn like an outer garment.

One thing, however, I am certain about. America has an almost limitless need abroad for Orville Pohmans—in Japan and elsewhere—who know that the best foundation for real understanding among peoples is on the level of a working friendship. Unless I miss my guess, Pinkie has made a convert for life. But right now, the convert would like to hear from the teacher. Does anyone know Pinkie?

—N. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Spongy Paper, Ah!

SIR: Unquestionably the greatest editorial achievement in your distinguished history: printing the Double-Crostic on that nice spongy paper and letting the Personals have that horrible Frigidaire stock.

W. M. DAVIS.

Missoula, Mont.

Naive Librarian

SIR: Keenly enjoying Horace Sutton's "Of Loves, Letters, and Librarians" [*SRL* Nov. 19], I thought you might enjoy this bit of history.

In Utica, New York, there is a fine library of which the citizens are justly proud. One day, a small, plain-looking man wearing horn-rimmed glasses approached the librarian's desk and asked if he might have the pleasure of going about and studying their various departments. The head librarian turned to her assistant, delegating to her the task of escorting the stranger.

This assistant had come recently from Smith College. She surely was the perfect model for all librarians—soft-spoken, a sweet face, large brown eyes, brown hair parted demurely in the middle, brown dress, and rubber-heeled shoes. She escorted the stranger from floor to floor and from rack to rack, rather surprised at his knowledge of their fine collections and his unusually intelligent questions.

When they at last reached the front door the visitor asked if the librarian could suggest a good place for a dinner. She looked him over from head to foot and said sympathetically, "Of course there is the Hotel Utica but it is expensive. Around the corner on —— Street there is a restaurant, the Martin, where you can get a good dinner for fifty cents."

He thanked her and departed. On the following Sunday, in the *New York Journal*, there was an article on the Utica Library, one of a series on libraries throughout the country. The article ended with these words, "I hope the naive little Utica librarian does not judge her books as she does her visitors by their outside bindings." It was signed, Arthur Brisbane.

Having done an early stint in that same library, I take pleasure in signing my name,

ANNE MILLER DOWNES.

Scarsdale, N. Y.

"Man and the Social Appetite"

SIR: I think that "Man and the Social Appetite" [*SRL* Nov. 19] should be used as a text from every pulpit, in every classroom, every civic forum. It may result in more Ashley Montagus.

ANNA C. FEINBERG.

Union City, N. J.

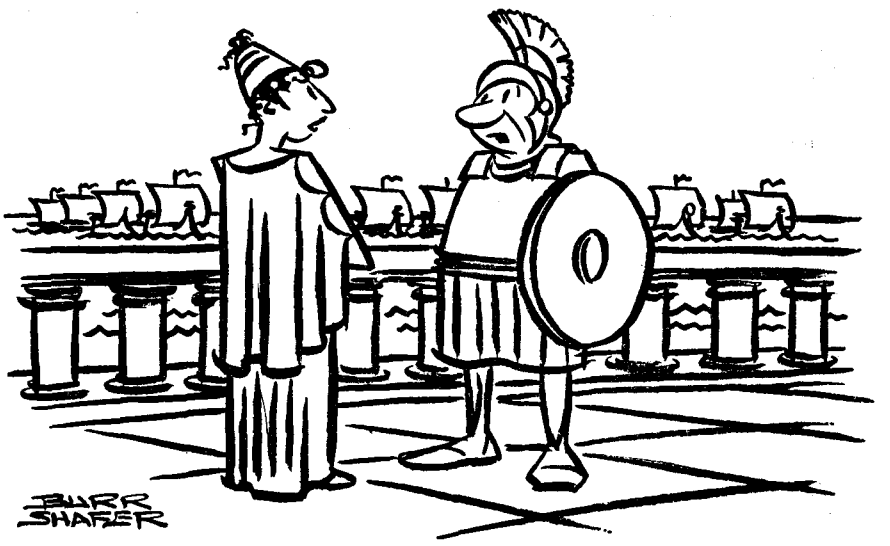
SIR: What is an "antisocial" person? I had supposed that he was just what several dictionaries say he is: "opposed to the system of social organization and rule"—something akin to an anarchist.

Many people now use the word "antisocial" when they mean unsocial or unsociable, and can quote some impressive new reference books to back their choice of an inaccurate and overlong word. Why should anyone take the prefix "anti—," which has always meant "against" or "opposed to," and use it as a synonym for the well-understood "un—," meaning "not"?

Almost any day we expect to hear someone say that a tramp is antitidy, his hair antikempt, his shoes antishined, or that he is antieducated, antipractical, and antiwilling to work.

M. H. KING.

Hartford, Conn.



THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"What your face should have launched is a bigger army!"

Taylor Caldwell's Good Will

SIR: Those of us who want a spirit of Christian brotherhood to prevail in our country and in the world and yet feel that we must be eternally vigilant where organizations have power and influence and selfish interests must deplore Taylor Caldwell's brand of good will and tolerance [LETTERS, *SRL* Nov. 12]. Even though our efforts may sometimes be misinterpreted and condemned—as they apparently are by Miss Caldwell—and may give aid and comfort to true bigots, to remain quiet and unconcerned over evil influences (or about what we believe to be evil tendencies) would be a sin against our fellow men.

Service in the recent war with comrades who were non-Christian or non-Protestant Christian taught me to slough off many little misconceptions and erroneous beliefs that had been permitted or encouraged to accumulate. I learned to accept people without regard to race, religion, color, or the cut of their clothes. However, there are still some rules that must be applied to my associations with others, rules that have to do with character, honesty, fair play, and many other qualifications of a similar nature. I must also apply these rules to associations of people whether they be business, religious, political, or otherwise.

It is not easy, with this current vogue of broad tolerance, to criticize organizations whose members or adherents were recently subjected to any degree of intolerance. Just as the anti-Communist is so often called a Fascist, the anti-Fascist a Communist, and the critic of the Fair Deal (or any part thereof) a reactionary, so those who have the temerity to question the avowed policies or practices of religious associations or organizations are publicly scorned as biased, bigoted, or narrow-minded.

Miss Caldwell prays that there be an end to hatred. I prefer to remember that Christ was in anger when he drove the money changers out of the Temple. I also make a stand that hatred of evil in any of its many forms is better than amoral good will.

MARSHALL LADD WINSLOW.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Thanks to Taylor Caldwell for writing her fine letter. Miss Caldwell's clear and generous sentiments do much towards making an otherwise acidulous page tolerably sapid.

C. I. ASHLEY.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Miss Caldwell, who modestly admits she does not know everything about the Roman Catholic Church, rushes heroically to its defense—heartily deploring the pitting of neighbor against neighbor. Mr. Jones, who, it seems, might be easily persuaded to admit with many of us that

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he knows comparatively little about the Roman Catholic Church, is against it. I am wholly in sympathy with Miss Caldwell's reaction to this pitting of American against American in hatred. How disgustingly true is her observation that these dog fights always follow the same pattern and that there is never anything "original" in one of them.

DAVID THOMAS.

Glen Ellyn, Ill.

SIR: I was interested enough in Taylor Caldwell's plea for "tolerance" recently—in which she tries to present an argument, as it seems to me, in favor of the Roman Catholic form of religious-political belief—to read it and pass it along to a few of my friends to read and consider.

I found that none to whom I showed it did other than agree with her conclusion: "In God's name, let there be an end to hatred." But some of us wondered if hatred itself isn't one of the terrible weapons used by all forms of ecclesiastical groups who are on the prowl now for control of economic-social-political power? "Power corrupts: absolute power corrupts absolutely," from the pen of Lord Acton, isn't to be laughed off by saying, "Oh the power WE want, is for a Beneficial Purpose: It is for the Good of Humanity: It is for the Greater Glory of Our Religion."

JOHN MOORE.

Hollywood, Calif.

Catholicism and Hatred

SIR: Your correspondent J. J. Jones [LETTERS, *SRL* Nov 12] is in error when he asserts that the precepts of the Catholic Church are based on hatred. The guiding principle of Catholicism has always been charity —*caritas*—and none of her rules are based on contempt for non-Catholics.

A Catholic is forbidden to attend Protestant worship, not out of hatred of Protestants, but because, being logically a possessor of truth, a Catholic has no need to seek it elsewhere. Since Catholics hold the Protestant versions of the Bible to be erroneous translations, they prefer to read a Catholic Bible.

Catholics are *not* forbidden to marry outside their faith, but they are discouraged from doing so, because the Church in her centuries of experience has found that the disadvantages of mixed marriages far outweigh the advantages.

It is true that Catholics hate heresy and schism, but they do not hate any human being, regardless of his belief. The rule "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is the core of Catholicism.

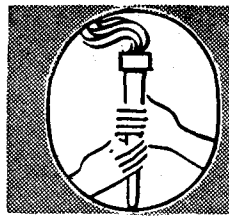
WILLIAM D. MULCAY.

Forest Hills, N. Y.

SIR: J. J. Jones misinterprets certain rules of the Catholic Church.

We are forbidden to *participate* in services of another denomination. This ruling is not based on hate, but love of truth. Ours is the one true Church. Participation in the services of any other would be sheer hypocrisy.

We are forbidden to marry a non-



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Catholic or a divorced person for the same reason. Love of truth.

The burial rites of the Catholic Church are quite naturally for its members. Neither of the two cases Mr. Jones worries so about is a member.

Has he forgotten that Christ's forgiveness on the Cross went only to the repentant thief?

MARY E. B. GANNON.

Brookline, Mass.

"Pearls of Publishing"

SIR: Congratulations on a much needed new feature, "Pearls of Publishing" [*SRL* Nov. 19, 26]. May I draw to your attention a very distinguished first novel which, in the opinion of a number of well-informed persons, has not yet received anything like the critical acclaim which it merits, "This Dark Monarchy," by Francis Leary, published about a month ago by E. P. Dutton. With a few exceptions (and these rather notable ones) this book is being left to make its own impression—which it is doing by word of mouth. But that, of course, takes time, and now it looks as though it was going to be left to the British to "discover" this very unique and talented young American writer, whose style is at once mature in its artistry and extremely vital and individual.

HELEN MARY LILLIE.

New York, N. Y.

Editorial Salt Lick

SIR: Your editorial "Even Good News Is News" [*SRL* Oct. 29] questions whether press or public is primarily responsible for the selection of news and the method of handling it. The answer is evident. The public is at fault, seeing that it has had a free choice these past forty years, for *The Christian Science Monitor* corresponds practically to what you have described as an ideal in your editorial. Other editors are lavish with words of praise for *The Monitor* but none has come up with the more sincere flattery of imitation. The reason is they would not get to first base financially, and they are in the publishing business to make a living. They tell us that giving the people what they want is part of the orderly and praiseworthy functioning of democracy. Back of this casuistry is the fact that only a heavily endowed institution operating on a nonprofit basis has been able to survive the present popular indifference to constructive news.

However, you *can* make a horse drink if you give him enough salt before leading him to water. I am happy to see *SRL* setting up an editorial salt lick. Keep going. Many will praise you with words, some even with subscriptions.

C. D. PRESTON

South Euclid, O.

Collected Inscriptions

SIR: When I was at the Brooklyn Public Library the other day, I was much impressed, as I always am by such utterances, with the words carved into marble outside the library. For example: "Here are enshrined the longings of great hearts and noble things that tower above the tide, the magic word that winged wonder starts, the garnered wisdom that has never died." Also: "Farther than arrow, higher than wings fly poetic song and prophet's word."

I wonder if anyone has ever brought into one collection the inscriptions and other utterances found on public libraries and public buildings.

OTIS MOORE.

Garnerville, N. Y.

Books for German Youth

SIR: I have been searching the bookshops and the reviewers' columns for a book to send a young German boy which will give him a picture of life in this country. The boy is highly intelligent, reads English well, and is romantically enthusiastic over America. His ideas have been formed by the American movies which he sees in Germany, the kindness he has met with from American friends who have helped his family through recent dark days, and the tales told him by gay young soldiers who lend him comic papers and supply him with chewing gum and chocolate.

While I do not wish to cool his great enthusiasm for the democracy and brotherly love which he hopes to find if his dream of one day finding his way to this earthly paradise is realized, I am anxious to find a picture of normal life here with light and shadow which will show him the real America, something he will never find in the movies. I am a contemporary of his grandmother, with whom I shared Miss Alcott and Mark Twain in my childhood and from whom I learned to know Johanna Spyri's charming stories, but I can find nothing to send the present generation. I am wondering if any *SRL* readers could recommend some youthful tales of present-day life in these United States, free from either fantasy or boastfulness.

MARY HALDANE COLEMAN.

Williamsburg, Va.

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ENJOY A POEM

(Continued from page 8)

present by asking a question: how do you, reader, distinguish between your responses to a very bad portrait of dear old Aunt Jane, and a very good one of Old Skinflint, the gentleman who holds your mortgage? The question is one that splits the reading audience straight down the middle: The tenacity with which the ladies of the poetry societies will hold on to Aunt Jane with a bluebird in her hair, and the persistency with which they reject all-that-is-not-bluebirds, reaches so far into the problem of a satisfactory approach to poetry (both reading and writing) that it has been necessary to evolve two terms: "poetry" for that which exists as an art form, "poesy" for that which exists as the sentimental bluebird in Aunt Jane's hair. Confusion is inevitable when these terms are not properly applied. The writers and readers of poesy always refer to their matter as poetry or true poetry, and defend it with as much violence as possible from "the ugly." Here is a piece of poesy—a sonnet of course:

THRENODY

Truth is a golden sunset far away
Above the misty hills. Its burning eye
Lights all the fading world. A bird
flies by
Alive and singing on the dying day.
Oh mystic world, what shall the
proud heart say
When beauty flies on beauty
beautifully
While blue-gold hills look down to
watch it die
Into the falling miracle of clay?

Say: "I have seen the wing of sunset
lift
Into the golden vision of the hills
And truth come flooding proud
through the cloud rift,
And known that souls survive their
mortal ills."
Say: "Having seen such beauty in
the air
I have seen truth and will no more
despair."

This is a fair example of what I have learned to call "prop-room poesy." It fills the stage as a poem might, but it fills it with pieces discarded from other poems and left to gather dust in the prop-room of tradition. It makes a stage of the stage, and brings the stage's own dust on as the play, rather than bring on the life outside the theatre.

The result may look like a poem, but is really no more than a collection of poetic junk. For example: "golden sunsets far away" (question: have you ever seen a non-golden one

"I have long since given over any sense of guilt . . . *but* the danger remains and will remain until that poor frame rots in its shallow grave."

" Perhaps it is this uneasiness that has led me to take up again my long abandoned pen," began Lydia, writing the dark chapters of twenty years ago . . .

" For two weeks I have not been able to bring myself to touch this manuscript. I have thought of a dozen excuses, but the real reason I well know and cannot conceal it from myself. I have come to the heart of the matter. I have come to Luke . . . Our lives lie in a thousand hands but from the thousand and first we never escape."

" The events of that time were living in the air about me, as actual and present as if I was still there on Hawk Island in the dead of winter and the howling of the storm."

" It was a poor enough grave, scarcely three feet deep, and it was dark when I finished . . ."

FOR several reasons, Lydia Howe was moved to put down on paper an account of the heartbreaking and terrifying year at Hawk Island, Maine. Her story is a novel of suspense on two levels, terror from the past and fear for the future — superbly written by

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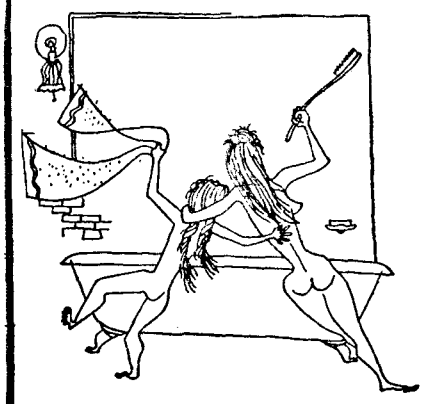

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Edited by

JOHN CIARDI

(See page 7 of this issue of SRL)

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GIVE BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

nearby?), "misty hills," "burning eye," "fading world," "a bird flies by alive and singing" (question: have you ever seen a none-live one fly by?), "dying day," "the proud heart." . . .

I have tried many times to explain to the enthusiasts of this school that any reasonably competent craftsman could concoct such a poem in a matter of minutes, and with his tongue in his cheek. I said exactly that from a public platform once and claimed I could turn out such an illusion-of-the-sonnet in three minutes flat. I was challenged and given a first line to start with, but I failed: I discovered it is impossible, simply mechanically, to write off fourteen lines in three minutes. It took four minutes and eighteen seconds. The "sonnet" I have quoted above was the poem produced in answer to that challenge, and by way of further experimentation I sent it off to a magazine for "traditional" poetry and had it accepted for publication. In a moment of cowardice I withdrew the poem for fear someone I respected might see my name attached to it. I was wrong, of course; no one whose poetic opinion I could respect would have been reading that magazine.

THE fact remains beyond all persuasion, however, that the devotees of poesy are violent in their charges against Modern Poetry (their capitals) as ugly, coarse, immoral, and debased (their adjectives). My good friend Geraldine Udell, business manager of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, the oldest magazine of good poetry in America, once showed me thirty-four letters received in one day's mail accusing the magazine of debasing the pure tradition of English poetry, and enclosing pages of poesy from two magazines of "traditional poetry" as specimens of what should be printed.

It is, you see, Aunt Jane and Old Skinflint with a vengeance. Poesy (which is always anti-poetry) wants it pretty. It wants comfortably worn-out props to which comfortable and vague reactions are already conditioned. Everyone understands the bluebird in Aunt Jane's hair; the response to it is by now so stereotyped that it will do for a birthday card. Poetry, on the contrary, insists on battering at life, and on making the poem capture the thing seen and felt in its own unique complex. It does not repeat, it creates. Therefore, some willingness to dismiss preconception from the reader's mind is necessary if one is to partake of that vital process. One is also required to get himself and his own loose-afflatus out of the way of the poem.

The fifth point then is simple: poesy is not poetry.

A sixth and related consideration follows almost immediately: it concerns the preconception that demands moral affirmation of oneself from a poem, just as poesy demands a loose emotional affirmation of oneself. Consistently adhered to, this application of one's own morality as a test of the poem can lead to ridiculous ends. It would require, for example, the rejection of Milton by all who do not agree with his theology. It might reject beforehand all poems containing the word harlot, since harlots are immoral, and by that test we should have to reject such great lines as Blake's:

The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave Old England's winding sheet.

Or, shifted to political concern, it might require a new Communist manifesto against any poem in which the lover is rich in his love, since it is bourgeois, decadent, and just plain indecent to be rich.

Similarly, I have observed many present-day reviewers to reject a poem because it seems cheerful ("withdrawal from reality"), because it does not ("defeatist and negativist"), because it is immediately understandable ("facile and slight"), and because it requires rereading ("obscurantist"). These are cartoons, of course, but they are cartoons of a real trend. The simple fact is that none of us can hope to be wholly free of preconceptions of one sort or another. I must confess, for example, that I still find Milton's theology a bit silly, and that my feeling prevents me from experiencing "Paradise Lost" as richly as I might. Even Milton's language creates blocks for me that he could not have intended and for which I am solely responsible. For whatever reason, I cannot read of Satan mounted on his "bad eminence" without an impulse to smile. I don't know why I want to smile at such a phrase, but I am sure the reason is

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 819)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY: *PIPEFULS*

(*Two Days Before Christmas*)

Hope that clockwork train for the Urchin will arrive soon; we were hoping to have three happy evenings playing with it before he sees it. Fine to have children; lots of fun playing with their presents. . . . Grand time, Christmas!

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within me and that it has nothing to do with the poem. I am being blocked in this case by a pre-set subjective response. I must, therefore, recognize the obstruction and try to allow for it. Unless I can do so, I am not permitting the poet his right to his own kind of vision and existence.

Point six, then: the poem does not exist to confirm moral, political, or religious pre-judgments. The poem as a poem is in fact amoral. The poem, I say, not the poet. The poet may be the most moral of men, but when he writes poetry he is performing a ritual dance. He may even sermonize, but if the poem is to succeed as a poem, it must be a dancing sermon. What the poem says is always hickory-dickory-dock, that ineffable, wonderful, everlasting dance of syllables that moves the mouse and winds the clock over and over again, and sends the child to sleep among the swinging nebulae. Or perhaps it is hickory-dickory-God, but still what the poem says is what the child dreams: "Look, Universe, I'm dancing." There is no immorality more wretched than the habit of mind which *will* insist on moralizing that dance.

The last necessity for good reading that I shall discuss here is tradition. If you will grant me the existence of an unintellectualized basis for poetry upon which the responses of all readers may meet, we can probably agree that a fair example of such a response may be found in, say, Juliet on her balcony swooning into moonlight at the sound of Romeo's song rising from the shrubbery. Hers is certainly a non-intellectualized response. It is certainly a living response. And a worldwide one: Black Jade in her moony garden in Peiping will respond in an almost identical way to Pao-yii's serenade from beyond the garden wall.

But wait: let us switch singers. Now Pao-yii is in Verona under Juliet's balcony, and Romeo is in Peiping outside Black Jade's garden. Both strike up a song. Why is it that both girls now hear not a swooning love-cry but something closer to the sound of sustained gargling? The answer is—Tradition.

For the fact is we are being educated when we know it least. We learn simply by the exposure of living, and what we learn most natively is the tradition in which we live. But the response acquired effortlessly within one tradition will not serve us in another, any more than speaking pure Tuscan will help us in Peiping.

In order to read poetry, then, one must read poetry. One may of course

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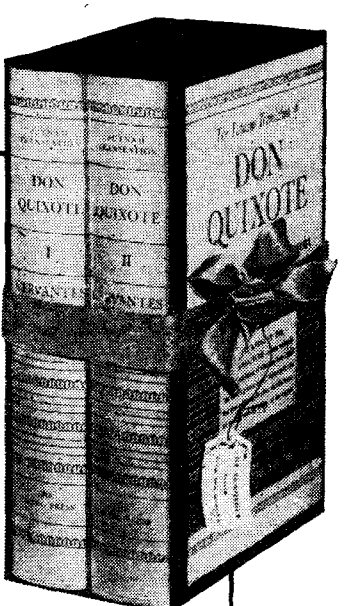
have read only bad poetry, and in that case he will read badly. The criterion Matthew Arnold set forth as "the touchstone method" may well be applied here. This critical theory states simply that all poetry is judged by great poetry. Poetry may be called great only when it has been acclaimed by so many generations of different poetical taste that its merit and universality are beyond dispute. The way to come to a poem, then, is with the memory of great singing in one's inner ear.

Greatness, however, can be a dangerous measure, for it immediately implies rendering a verdict. I for one cannot lose the belief that it is more important to experience the poem than to judge it. Certainly there is real pleasure to be had from poetry no one will ever consider great or near-great. Certainly, too, every mental action implies a kind of judgment. Nevertheless, it seems to me more desirable in every way for the reader to conceive of himself as a participant in the action of the poem, rather than as a trial judge pondering its claim to immortality.

Time, of course, will hand down that verdict, and in a way from which there is no appeal. It may then happen that the verdict will be against modern poets, and against the principles on which they write. But until that verdict has been achieved, it would be well to bear in mind that the reader is as liable to error as the poet, and that when the poem fails to communicate, the failure may as reasonably be charged against the one as against the other.

John Ciardi is a member of the English department of Harvard University. This essay is drawn from his introduction to an anthology, "Mid-Century American Poets," to be released shortly by Twayne Publishers.



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DIAL-HOPPING

(Continued from page 18)

200,000 listeners, which makes it the best attended purely FM station in and around New York. More important, followers of WABF stay with it. Listeners, the station claims, keep tuned in an average of 3.8 hours a day. Dial-hopping, the anathema of conventional radio, is apparently no problem.

WABF's attitude toward advertising has worked out extremely well. Sponsors are actually fighting to buy time and are completely satisfied with the clause in their contract which gives Hirschmann the last say as to what is to go out on the air.

"What's amusing about all this," Hirschmann said to me, "is that I did what was obvious, what anybody could and can do. Everybody who listens to radio suffers from the same irritations that I did. But the broadcasters choose to ignore our wounded feelings. They have permitted themselves to become frozen into a pattern and it is hard to get out of it. They have followed the line of least resistance. I feel that worth-while accomplishments come by following the line of most resistance.

"Consider that today 75 per cent of all WABF programs are records. We assemble them into programs with the utmost care. We keep a check-rein on announcers' voices, control the amount of advertising, avoid rigid split-second scheduling. There, in a nut shell, is our formula—something that any broadcaster with an honest concern for the listener can do."

The creator of all this is a blend of rock-headed businessman and humanitarian. Born in Baltimore, he majored in economics at Johns Hopkins and upon graduation came to New York, where his first job was office boy in a department store. Ten years later he was its vice president.

Always a bit wacky about music, he decided that what the country needed was good chamber music, and in 1936 he founded the New Friends of Music, which gave concerts at low prices. It is still functioning, one of the few musical groups the Voice of America broadcasts to the world. It still runs at a deficit but Hirschmann pays it cheerfully. "Some people spend their money in night clubs," he said. "I spend it on music."

The thirty persons who are the total personnel of WABF are a cozy, compatible team of individuals united by their love for music. The chief engineer—a woman—can read a score.

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The porter plays the violin. A secretary is an expert on the history of music. Once a month the staff gathers to set the programs for the following thirty days, and to criticize what has gone before. The meeting is strictly hammer and tongs, its purpose being to produce a well-balanced, harmonious musical menu.

WABF is no bloodless corporation. You can discover this for yourself by picking up a telephone and calling it. The voice at the other end will be friendly and helpful, will discuss music with you, offer to lend you a score. Your letters will receive the same treatment. "There's not a form letter in the place," Hirschmann says proudly. "Every letter gets a personal reply."

During the past summer's unbearable heat, he sent out 600 letters of inquiry about WABF to listeners. A direct-mail specialist told him that the best he could expect in reply was a 5-per-cent return. Some 470 replies came back, or 78 per cent, proof of the remarkable devotion WABF has aroused in people. Albert Einstein wrote a rhapsodic letter. And Clifton Fadiman said he would do anything he could to help the station.

Periodically, Hirschmann looks over the field of young artists about to make their debut and selects the most promising. Then he offers his listeners free tickets—except for the payment of the tax—to the recital. So wide is the station's following, so deep the respect musicians have for it, that invariably the halls are packed. And always they are attended by the newspapers' topflight music critics. It is difficult for a beginner to get a start in the concert world. Through WABF, the launching is done with éclat and a fair hearing is assured.

Hirschmann has been running the station for three years. It has not always been smooth sailing but now its success is assured. Hirschmann's mind teems with plans for the future. He hopes to establish as an integral part of the station a music center with a library of books on music and scores for the general public. Then he proposes to play, over a ten-year period, the entire literature of music, including all the lesser known composers whom we have forgotten but who are worth remembering.

"The funny thing," Hirschmann repeats, "is that what I have done is so simple anybody could do it. Any local radio station in the United States could put on the same quality programs we do, and with the same success. There is nothing quite so practical as idealism."

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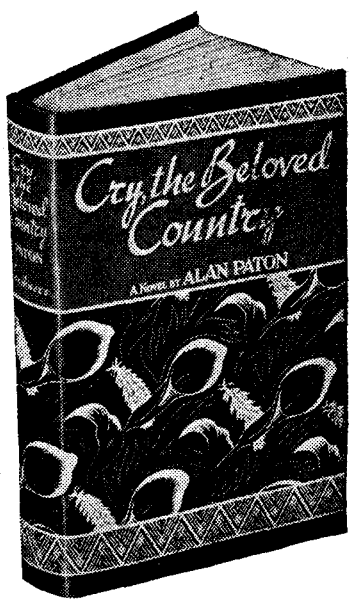

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Seeing Things

HELEN HOKINSON

WHEN his old friend William Archer died, Shaw, writing for once completely from the heart, confessed the impoverishment he felt at the idea of returning to an "Archerless London." "I still feel," he added, "that when he went he took a piece of me with him."

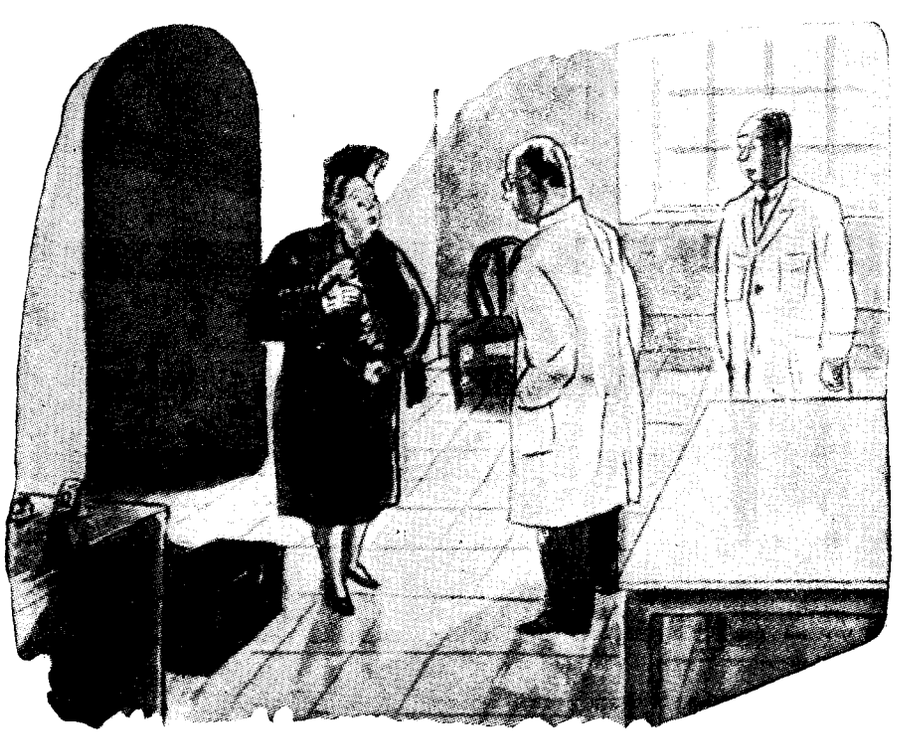
All of us, if only we have lived long enough, have been wounded beyond healing by similar losses. All of us, as the years slip by, face increasingly the problem of living with the abiding subtractions of death. These create gaps which cannot be filled and leave us suddenly lonely in the midst of crowds.

A few weeks back, when Helen Hokinson was among the fifty-five needlessly snuffed out in that air crash over Washington, thousands of us experienced once again this dreaded sense of deprivation even though ours had not been the privilege of knowing her personally. There is a difference, however, between the London without Archer to which Shaw returned and the America without Helen Hokinson in which we find ourselves. She is gone; abruptly, wastefully, tragically gone. Yet ours is by no means a Hokinsonless world. Her dying did not put an end to what we had all come to identify with her. That part of the American scene which she had staked off as her own can still be found everywhere, and its inhabitants will continue to bear her name so long as they present milliners with dilemmas and girdles with problems.

"My Best Girls" she called them, those denizens of women's clubs, beauty parlors, art galleries, summer resorts, and Lane Bryant, when she gave a title to one of her collections of *The New Yorker* drawings. This is what they were. Precisely that. Miss Hokinson's affection for her ample dowagers was so clear every time she caught their lines in hers that they were never offended by the fun she made of them. Symptomatic of the pleasure they took in her work was the letter she once received from a lady, a Hokinson lady of course, in Needham, Mass., who wrote, "More power to you and the girls. The more I grow to look like them, the more I love them."

What doubtless had equipped Miss Hokinson for dealing with American matrons in a manner not only unequaled but unexcelled is that in her art-school days, when she had left Chicago for New York, she studied dynamic symmetry. Her women were never to be confused with Clare Boothe's. They were stouts seeking in all matters to be stylish rather than worldlings straining to be smart. Their sins of the flesh were dietary, not temperamental. They were—every mother's daughter of them—benevolent creatures waging a breathy, though losing, battle against the most innocent of appetites. If they carried more weight physically than they did intellectually, it was not because they failed to include culture among their pursuits.

Wherever their minds may have remained parked, those tiny feet of theirs, which terminated their plump legs, were forever carrying their bodies into book stores and museums, or leading them to lectures, matinees, or concerts. That is, of course, when Miss Hokinson's well-fed, well-bred, and thoroughly minked ladies were not molesting flowers, cajoling maids, tangling traffic, indulging in very private college reunions, massacring good liquor with unforgivable feminine additions, breaking down global problems into Westchester terms, or attempting to become sylphs again by submitting themselves to the costly Spartanism of Elizabeth Arden.



"Is it all right for an expectant mother to catch chipmunks?"

IF THEY were resistant to the higher things, at least they were not dishonest in their reactions to them. Pretense was never one of their follies. At the Metropolitan's exhibition of French tapestries they were not embarrassed to ask an astonished guard, "Does it matter which end we do them from?" Confronted with abstract paintings in the Museum of Modern Art, one of them said, "I never know how far away to stand to make them look good." Picking up a volume in a book store, another inquired of the saleswoman, "Would this be all right for a friend who isn't interested in much of anything?" Turning to some companions, all of them as much alike as sister ships, still another summoned the honesty to complain during the intermission of a play, "It overwhelmed Brooks Atkinson, but it isn't overwhelming *me*." Or, listening to the Philharmonic, one of them, instead of parroting the program notes, offered as her sole comment: "I often wish I had kept up my mandolin lessons."

I have my reasons for citing these examples of that delectable off-beat in sense we associate with Miss Hokinson's world and work. All of these examples happen to be culled from

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her last book, "When Were *You* Built?" And that volume, significantly enough, was dedicated to James Reid Parker, whose captions, as she put it, "have inspired most of these drawings." In other words, as we are apt to forget, Miss Hokinson did not work alone. Mr. Parker was her silent partner. He was her idea man, and theirs one of the happiest of collaborations. Without any of the frictions of the lords of the Savoy, they found themselves as perfectly matched as Gilbert and Sullivan.

If Miss Hokinson's was the seeing eye, Mr. Parker's was the hearing ear. And what an ear it was—wonderful in its genius for seizing upon the absurd, wonderful in holding its nonsense close to truth, and also wonderful for the incredible accuracy with which it pounced upon *the* word among all other words to make its satiric point without letting any blood. Take, for instance, the dowager saluting a street cleaner on Christmas day with "Joyeux Noel, my good man!" Or asking the captain of an ocean liner when it passes a cruiser, "Aren't we going to toot?" Or rising at a business meeting of a woman's club to announce, "I'm sorry, Madam President, there won't be any treasurer's report this month because we have a deficit." Or remarking to the instructor at a skating rink before taking to the ice, "I warn you, my right foot is a rebel."

The impact of such captions is instantaneous. They tell their own story and raise their own laughs. At least they seem to. But, as Mr. Parker would no doubt be the first to admit, they depend for their full relish upon the women—the Helen Hokinson women—we visualize as we read them.

Miss Hokinson's delineation of these women grew in certainty with the years. To realize this, one has only to follow her career from the first collection of her *New Yorker* drawings, "So You're Going to Buy a Book!" (1931), through "My Best Girls" (1941), to "When Were *You* Built?" (1948). During that richly productive period a type she had stumbled upon emerged as a species branded with her name. In no time this modest and retiring woman from Mendota, Ill., who had once done an unsuccessful comic strip for the *Mirror* called "Sylvia in the Great City," created a comic pattern cherished and admired by all Americans, including those from whom it was derived.

They were quite a group, these Hokinson dowagers. Funny, they certainly were. Yet they were also human, very human, and poignant, too. Their feelings belied their contours.

Illustrations from "When Were You *Built?"*

"What are the *women* of distinction drinking?"

They could not bring themselves to realize that their youth had left them. Regardless of the shadows they cast, they were girls at heart; girls who, though they had grown big, had never grown up. The calendar was unable to tarnish or remove their naivete. They were innocents both abroad and at home. One of the most ridiculous and touching of their characteristics was that their idea of mischief remained juvenile. They were worldings whom neither time nor exposure could make worldly. A reliable contributor to the hilarity they unfailingly provided was the contrast between their ingenuousness and the sophistication of their surroundings.

Economics was beyond them. The only figures with which they concerned themselves were their own, and even these they could not master. Their chief problem was idleness. Time hung heavy on their dimpled hands. Like all women who are unemployed, they had to seek employment in order to fill their empty days. Theirs was the usual solution. They were incessant shoppers. They were more intrigued with what covered their heads than with what filled them. Hats were their joy, and the search for them was a release from inactivity.

Gregarious as they were, Miss Hokinson's matrons were lonely, a fact which they confessed by squandering their affections on diminutive dogs. Even Philip Wylie could not have disliked these women since they were entirely innocent of momism. They were too busy babying themselves to mother anyone else. Foolish and self-indulgent as they were, they were never guilty of meanness. They were a friendly breed. This explains why they made so many friends. Miss Hokinson's fondness for them was transparent and contagious. Hers was the rarest of satiric gifts. She had no contempt for human failings. She approached foibles with affection. She could ridicule without wounding. She could give fun by making fun, and in the process make no enemies.

The New Yorker's loss is ours. It is saddening to realize Miss Hokinson will not draw her dowagers again. We, however, can derive some solace from the fact that the special world she discovered is still very much with us. Every time we see or chance to overhear pampered ladies of a certain size and vintage Helen Hokinson will be with us, too. She will be in our minds and also on our lips. The truth is she has become a living part of our vocabulary.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

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FICTION

(Continued from page 17)

lightful and entertaining book, spiced with gentle malice and a kindly but unsparing sense of the ridiculous.

—SARA HENDERSON HAY.

THE GIRL IN THE SPIKE-HEELED SHOES, by Martin Yoseloff. Dutton. $3. Maybelle Reardon is the girl in the spike-heeled shoes: the girl who sits thoughtful and dreaming in the confessional booth of Immaculate Heart by day, and who stands alone at night outside the movies and the dance-halls waiting for adventure. She is rootless, of a broken home, and she is friendless, since in a town like her Kenyon, Iowa, girls who wear spike-heeled shoes and wait on tables and live alone in furnished rooms can expect no sympathy from their correct and well-protected sisters. She walks alone, bold and foolish, with a certain amount of bravery and, as Martin Yoseloff sees her, a virtue all her own.

Mr. Yoseloff's portrait of Maybelle is carefully made, of many details strung doggedly together as she herself might have seen them, of tired days at school and weary nights in a foster home, of jobs in restaurant and box-office, of brief visions of joy, dancing, dating, the blank faces of men, at last the experiment of marriage. It is not in any sense an inspired portrait; it seems sometimes to be a lifeless one. It is as though Mr. Yoseloff, in his determination neither to idealize nor to dramatize Maybelle, has forgotten just what it was in her that set him to work. He has arranged the details of her life before us with evident kindness. Lacking is the vision or the urgency which might have made his kindness seem more than a literary duty.

—NATHAN L. ROTHMAN.

LIKE LESSER GODS, by Mari Tomasi. Bruce. $3. The greatness of the little man, the ringing dedication of the instinctive craftsman, and the buckling loneliness of the uprooted concern Miss Tomasi. She leads us into the Vermont hills, where an almost entirely Italian community thrives on cutting granite tombstones. This is labor of the hands, of the heart, and finally of the body. Dust infects the lungs; death from the silica claims fathers and sons too early. Resignation rather than bitterness is the woman's lot. But things should not be otherwise. The philosopher schoolteacher, the sympathetic priest, the defiantly progressive doctor, and the second-generation Amer-

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—C. M. B.

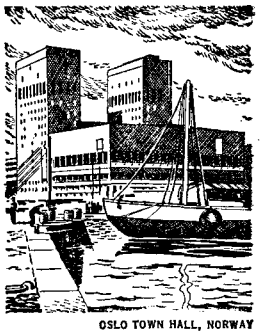
A FAMILY MATTER, by Janet McFarlane. Scribner's. $3. Janet McFarlane has written a story of the destruction of childhood as horrifying, or more so, than Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw" or Graham Greene's "The Basement Room."

Mark Ireland had brought his family—Alice, his wife, Jessie and Ellen, their daughters—to the city during a business venture, which, once its first lean period was over, would mean a decided financial advance for them. The sudden transplanting to the city, to a shabby and crowded apartment, meant fresh and individual problems for each member of the family, and, while outwardly it was a family like thousands of others, under the superficial appearance of unity everything was wrong with the Irelands. For Mark had married a woman cold, unloving, and mean, absorbed in her own climate of martyrdom, jealous and suspicious, who starved her children and husband in any emotional need.

Miss MaFarlane's story of one virulently "good" woman's corrosive influence on the lives which touch hers is powerful and dramatically compelling. Underscoring with her ironic title the terrible tragedy of betrayal which is her theme, she has documented fully that favorite observation of the psychologists that there are no problem children, only problem parents. And in little Jessie, in her anguished effort to escape the evil forced upon her by the one person from whom she should have expected security, she has presented a haunting little figure.

—PAMELA TAYLOR.

BOUND GIRL, by Everett and Olga Webber. Dutton. $3. This is the story of Rebecca Whitman, daughter of Abolitionist settlers in Kansas during the bloody days of the Civil War border disputes. The chief excellence of the Webbers' book lies in their graphic and accurate re-creation of that turbulent period of American history when the pro-slavery factions of Missouri and the Free Soilers of newly-opened Kansas were at each others' throats. Bands of armed men ranged the countryside, and when the raiders came the third time, the last of their poor holdings gone, the Whit-



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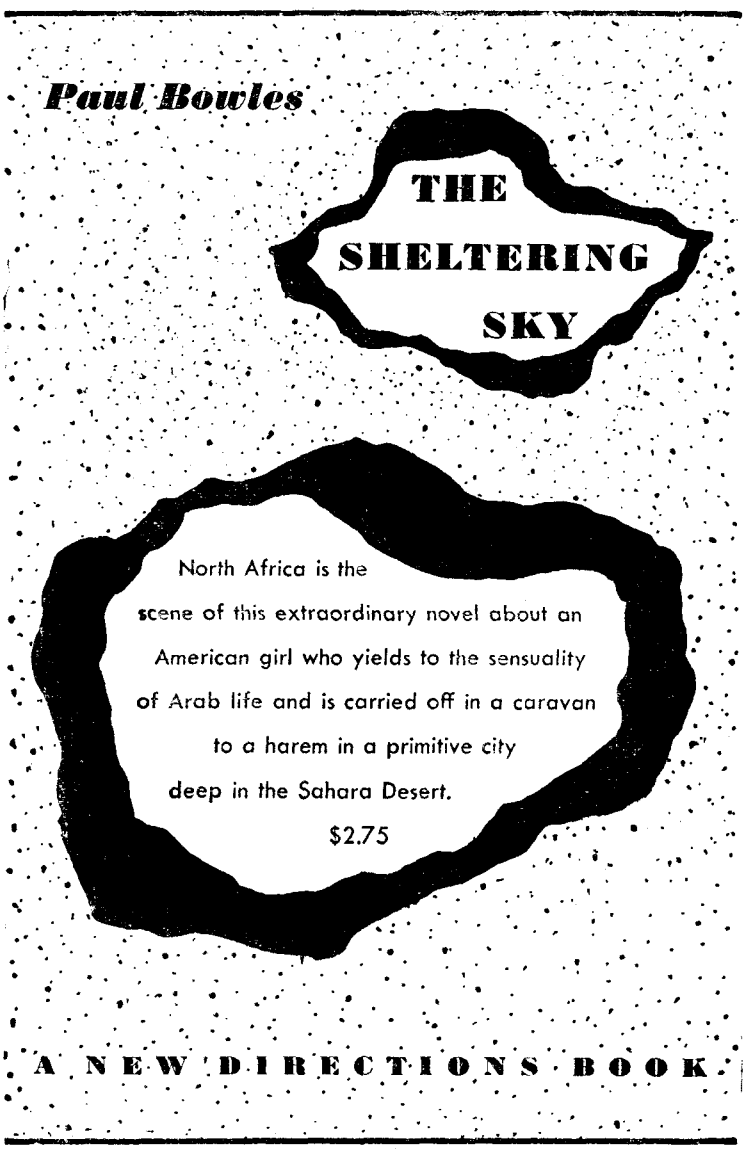
mans made their way on foot toward refuge in a neutral Missouri border tavern. To secure provisions and equipment to enable the rest of the family to make the long trip back to Ohio, seventeen-year-old Rebecca was "bound out" for four years to Rowan, the proprietor.

After a tentative romance with a Yankee peddler, Rebecca entered into a marriage of convenience with one Jude Prentiss, a taciturn and embittered man whose wife had run off with a dashing gambler. Jude bought the tavern, and together they managed it, and the loveless marriage eventually blossomed into the real thing. The authors have made Rebecca a credible and appealing character, and one could wish that they had been content with the real drama of her situation and had not complicated the plot with the introduction of stock melodrama, adding a Grade B flavor to what is otherwise an extremely well-done story of real people against a background of exciting actuality. —S. H. H.

ROGUE'S MARCH, by Maristan Chapman. Lippincott. $3. Coonskin drama in the frontier mountains of Tennessee. Those distant muskets mark the fray between the Redcoats and the emerging American. Cornwallis struts, Whigs and Tories vie for untrammeled spoils, while the wild woodlands shelter old-style heroes. Villains come neatly packaged, as do lovely ladies bent on patriotism but far from scornful of proffered romance.

This is the unpillared South. Stalwart half-breeds fight side by side with contented slaves to push the dream to Yorktown. Plots, counterplots, escape from almost certain death, and myriad clashes dot this rather neglected zone with action. Individuals lose themselves in event. Endlessly oncoming hoofbeats muffle ideas. Made to measure for movement. —C. M. B.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JANE

(*Continued from page* 11)

proper total and still catch a baronet.

Jane Austen worked within a fixed framework of values and traditions; she was spared explaining much that a novelist feels compelled to explain or justify now; she felt no temptation to defend or attack the society of which she wrote, but could concentrate on individuals. She was in complete control of her material—the society which she knew in the country, at Bath, and in London—and she refused to step beyond the bounds of her knowledge. Character and the interactions of characters, however unpleasant, were for her an endless source of artistic pleasure. The observation and discovery of mankind were activities of which she never tired, and she was gifted, to a degree that must be called uncanny, with the ability to communicate her findings in the form of satirical, ironical, but always amiable, fiction. Her range of understanding was remarkable: John Thorpe was as transparent to her as was Miss Bates; she read Mr. Elliot as clearly as she read Mrs. Weston. Her command of words was perfectly equal to her insights and her aims; the opening sentences of her six novels are in themselves minor masterpieces of verbal skill. Her language was beautifully equal to her comic sense—one can quote her endlessly—and in no other novelist, perhaps, has this sense, untouched by bitterness or burlesque, been so pervasive, so unfailing. Where shall we find another author who has given us a half-dozen novels that hold as many high comedy scenes as hers?

It is impossible for a comic writer to be great if he sees only life's comic aspects, and surely Jane Austen suffered from no such partial blindness, but she makes only slight demands on our emotions, while constantly engaging our intelligence, on not too lofty levels, and giving us the pleasant sensation of being, for the moment, as clever as she. This—the fact that she does not require too much of us—is perhaps the secret that makes it possible for the Janeites to read her books again and again, to return to them, not only for refreshment and stimulation, but also for restful, unhurried, unimpassioned enjoyment. If, however, she asks little of her readers, it was no small demand that she made upon herself. It was what every truly great writer must require of himself—nothing less than the creation of a world.

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The Film Forum

ROOSEVELTIANA

***The Saturday Review*'s Weekly Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *These two films, one of feature length and one a short subject, are noteworthy attempts to edit and re-use ordinary newsreel camera material to interpret recent history and the outstanding political leader and international figure of the times.*

THE ROOSEVELT STORY

Produced by Tola Productions. Distributed by Brandon Films, 1700 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. (80 min.)

For many reasons this film is extraordinary and unique. First, it is made up of scenes from the life of an extraordinary public man who in an almost magic way evoked immediate and deep emotional responses from millions of contemporaries. In addition, the film outlines the recent political and social history of this nation and of the world in larger-than-life dimensions. And perhaps most impressive of all, although without the sensitivity it might have shown, the film charts the development of a man, one man, from his youth to his death. In all respects this is an important film.

To abbreviate Franklin Delano Roosevelt's dynamic and overwhelmingly full life into eighty minutes is like reducing a banquet meal to merely the seasonings. We see only the highlights, and in this man's life it means every moment is an occasion, every utterance a byword. But, even so, Roosevelt emerges as less of a myth in this film than he did during his lifetime.

As the somber funeral procession goes down Pennsylvania Avenue on April 14, 1945, an unseen cabdriver speaks out: "This is a day to remember. . . ." But there were other days. And the film goes back to FDR's early life. Hyde Park, Groton, Harvard, marriage, and a family. Roosevelt as Assistant Secretary of the Navy during Wilson's Presidency; campaigning for Al Smith; himself a smiling candidate in 1920 for the Vice Presidency; and in August 1921, at the age of thirty-nine, stricken with infantile paralysis.

The Roosevelt we all knew makes his first appearance in the film at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1932. Will Rogers gives him a faltering impromptu introduction, apologizes for his own lack of eloquence, and reminds Roosevelt that he really doesn't deserve any better. "Remember you're only a candidate." Franklin Roosevelt throws back his head and laughs. The tenseness is over; the personal crisis is dispelled; a new dramatic figure appears on the political scene, a great leader, a voice heard by millions, a name known and respected and loved around the world.

The film continues: Unemployment at an all-time critical point. The opposition declares that prosperity is just around the corner. In Florida a deranged man's bullet misses the President-elect, and Mayor Cermak loses his life. The bank holiday, beer, NRA, WPA, and the rest of the alphabet. And in Germany another powerful man makes his mark on history's pages. Roosevelt tells the story of a gardener who thumbed his nose at the President. The fireside chats. War brews in Europe. The people elect. And Hitler begins his march; too soon he is dancing at the downfall of France. Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt and Churchill. Casablanca, Cairo, Teheran, then Yalta. The President's last message to Congress. A gaunt, worn face. Unbelievable. The long, slow procession. Streets of the world lined with the friends this man made in his lifetime. They grieve and they weep. He had spoken for millions of inarticulate people. Now they must learn to speak for themselves.

The task of assembling this film was not a simple one. Roosevelt was a master performer before the camera and the microphone, and he acted out his story every day of his life. What we see in the film are only excerpts from the real Roosevelt story. There is some "mush" in the film, too, moments of excruciating over-sentimentality—the episode about the draftee and his sweetheart, for example. But the whole film has a terrific impact, and I should think that everyone in the world would want to see it, for one reason or another.

"The Roosevelt Story" was produced by Martin Levine and Oliver A. Unger, with Elliot Roosevelt as editorial consultant. Musical score is by Earl Robinson, and short choral selections were directed by Robert Shaw. Walter Klee compiled and edited the film.

FDR—THE LIFE OF ROOSEVELT

Produced and distributed by Official Films, 25 W. 45th St., New York 19, N. Y. (15 min.)

This is an interesting supernewsreel, with many of the same shots which were used in the long film, but without the dramatic narration. If "The Roosevelt Story" is merely excerpts, this film is something like a glimpse of a glimpse.

—CECILE STARR.

For information about the purchase or rental of any films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York 19, N. Y.

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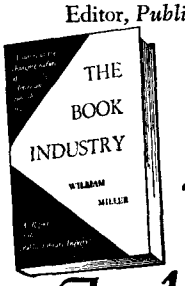

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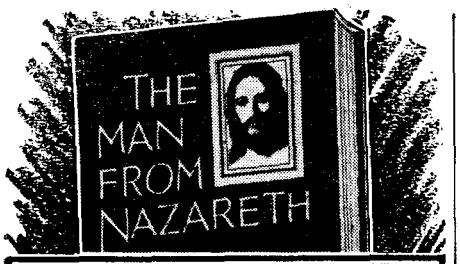

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CHRISTMAS 1949

THE long fall with its sunny days and windless nights hardly prepared us for the coming of Christmas this year. Thanksgiving Day brought a mild "cold-snap," and the long lines in the post offices where American men and women sent Christmas packages overseas warned us that the season of giving and receiving was near.

Christmas began for this reviewer down in North Carolina during Book Week, listening to large groups of boys and girls singing "The Twelve Days of Christmas," with Richard Chase and his recorder. Two of the original drawings from Ilonka Karasz's lovely book were in the window of The Straughan Bookshop in Greensboro. The "long pines" and the oak trees in their late fall dress of deep, rich red brought the Christmas colors to the hills around as we motored to Jugtown and to outlying schools. The Book Fair in Manhattan gave thousands of boys and girls and their elders a chance to select the perfect gift. The windows of book stores, the shelves and tables in public libraries are ablaze with color this year. We like to feel that Nancy Barnhard's beautiful Bible, Glen Rounds's "Rodeo," and good stories like Cornelia Meigs's "The Two Arrows," Walter Edmonds's "Cadmus Henry," and John Tunis's "Son of the Valley" are being given to boys and girls as permanent possessions. A book given as a Christmas gift has a special value always. To all the children of America and of the world this department wishes a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

—MARY GOULD DAVIS.

THE WONDERFUL HOUSE-BOAT-TRAIN. By Ruth Styles Gannett. Illustrations by Fritz Eichenberg. New York: Random House. 64 *pp.* $2.

RUTH GANNETT'S "My Father's Dragon" got the *Herald Tribune* Award last year and, in the opinion of this department, it should have received the Newbery Medal. This second book hasn't the originality of the first in either text or illustration, but it is a book that will probably be strongly approved by the younger boys and girls. It is a gay, funny tale of Grandfather Pop-ups and his four vigorous, resourceful grandchildren. Pop-ups was a retired railroad engineer who decided to move to the country because it was cheaper. He and the four children found on a hilltop six rather old and shabby sheds standing in a row. They immediately proceeded to make the sheds into a house-train. Then the authorities decided to run a new thoroughfare right through the caboose. So Pop-ups and the children, assisted by kind neighbors, put wheels on the six sheds and wheeled them down to the river. Empty barrels were attached and Pop-ups and his family had a house-boat-train, all complete. It was a perfect place to live in during the summer and in the winter they could go and live with the farmer on the hill. Fritz Eichenberg always makes drawings that are exactly right for the text. These are, but they would be more effective on better paper.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY. Arranged by Elizabeth Yates. Illustrated by Nora S. Unwin. New York: Aladdin Books. 54 *pp.* $2.

Elizabeth Yates's arrangement is to give the Christmas story from the gospels of Luke and Matthew, with the prophecies of Isaiah as a prelude and short quotations from John and Revelations as an ending. It is a logical sequence and it emphasizes the beauty and the rhythm of the King James version. The wood engravings and the initial letters are not unlike the paintings of the fifteenth-century Italian artists, only these are in black and white. The pages have wide margins and the type is particularly good. The book is bound in red cloth.

MISS FLORA McFLIMSEY'S CHRISTMAS EVE. By Mariana. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. No paging. $1.

Miss Flora McFlimsey was a doll who had lain forgotten in an attic

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for many years. Then Santa Claus, who needed one more doll for little Diana, found her, took her downstairs, and placed her under the Christmas tree. The new dolls were very snooty to her until the Christmas angel miraculously produced her wardrobe, completely restored to its original elegance, and made Miss McFlimsey look fresh and beautiful again. Water-color drawings that look as though they had been made directly on the page show Miss McFlimsey, the attractive details of her wardrobe, and the other things under the Christmas tree.

JOY AND THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL. By Pamela Bianco. New York: Oxford University Press. 40 *pp.* $1.75.

Like "Playtime in Cherry Street" last year, this is an exquisite little book illustrated with delicate, rather intricate drawings in black and white with touches of the Christmas red and green. It tells of a small girl who had a midnight party for the angel who stood on the very top of the Christmas tree. The story is for the younger boys and girls, but Pamela Bianco's drawings have value for people of all ages.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS. By Lee Kingman. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. New York: Doubleday & Co. 95 *pp.* $1.50.

This is a Christmas story of the Finnish family that lives at Cape Ann on the New England Coast. We have met them before. It is good to meet them again. Little Ekki Seppala's older brother was driven out to sea by a high wind not long before Christmas, and Ekki knew that without him there would be no toys for himself and for the younger children. So he went bravely to work and made wooden toys for them all. Then on Christmas Eve Matti came home. It was the best Christmas because Ekki had learned the joy of giving as well as of receiving. This story, simple and appealing, is illustrated with black and white drawings of the snow-covered New England village at Christmas time.

THISTLY. By Tasha Tudor. New York: Oxford University Press. No paging. $1.50.

Tasha Tudor's books make the nicest kind of Christmas present for little boys and girls. This story and the lovely drawings printed in color tell of Thistly B., a canary who belonged to Efner and Tom. Their god-

—*From "The Christmas Story."*

mother brought Thistly B. a mate and the two canaries set up housekeeping in Efner's doll house. The eggs were laid and the little canaries brought up in the doll's bath tub. The details of the doll's house and the drawings of Tom and Efner are especially attractive.

A HORSE TO RIDE. By Grace Paull. New York: Doubleday & Co. No paging. $1.25.

The lithographs that illustrate this story of a real little boy and his horse are printed in dark blue and green and a pale golden yellow. It is an attractive picture book. Terry wanted a horse of his own, so he and Aunt Mary bought Turk, a beautiful golden palamino with a white mane and tail. All summer Terry rode on Turk, sometimes with Aunt Mary, sometimes alone. When winter came they harnessed Turk to a sleigh and went on sleigh rides. The background of this story and the pictures is upper New York State.

THE TWO ARROWS: A Story by Cornelia Meigs. New York: The Macmillan Co. 249 *pp.* $2.50.

THIS is the best story that Cornelia Meigs has written for the older boys and girls since "Master Simon's Garden." Like that earlier book, its background is the American colonies. It is the story of two English boys, brothers, who come to Maryland as indentured servants in 1745. Ronald, the older of the two, is a skilful carpenter who has been trained in England by a famous builder, Master Germaine. Ronald is accused of disloyalty to King George and loyalty to the Stuart Prince Charlie, but the real reason for his imprisonment and his shipment as a

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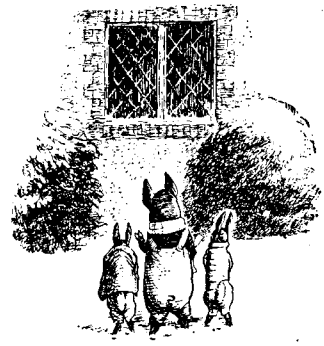

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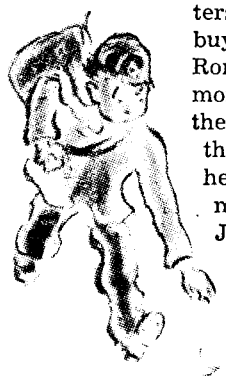
servant to the New World is the desire of one of the colonists to have a builder for his new house on the shore of Chesapeake Bay. This plot against Ronald runs all through the story of the journey and the adjustment of the two brothers to life in Maryland. Throughout the story, too, moves the mysterious and compassionate figure of Adam Farr, who years before had been forced to leave England because of his devotion to the Stuart cause.

Cornelia Meigs knows well how to balance her characters. The family that buys the services of Ronald and Jan is more than fair in their treatment of them. Adam Farr helps them both immeasurably when Jan is caught in the smuggling plot that is plaguing the new colony. It is all cleared up in the end, and Ronald's bitterness is lost in his romance with the master's daughter. It is a story that leaves one with a warm admiration for a writer who can create such varied and convincing characters, who can make a dramatic plot without melodrama, who can paint so vivid a background. This is a book of enduring value.



—*From "Bixxy and the Secret Message."*

BIXXY AND THE SECRET MESSAGE. By Louis Slobodkin. New York: The Macmillan Co. 94 pp. $2.

IF THIS isn't a true story, it might easily be. It will undoubtedly be accepted as a true story by the delighted boys and girls who read it. It is the saga of Bixxy, a carrier pigeon who is a member in good standing of the United States Army. Bixxy is entrusted with a secret and very important message which he is to fly from his home base in New Jersey to an Army base on Long Island. From there a jet plane is to take it to a "friendly power" in Asia. Bixxy is loyal, well trained, and persistent. He is also, unfortunately, rather absent-minded, and on this important occasion he forgets to eat his breakfast. Flying over lower Manhattan he spies a truck that has met with an accident and is scattering salted peanuts all over the place. He swoops down and eats quite a lot of them. Extremely thirsty as a result, on his flight up Broadway he looks about for a drink. Unluckily, what Bixxy thinks is water turns out to be fresh tar, which gets all over his wings and legs and prevents him from flying.

But Bixxy is a carrier pigeon and he knows that there is a message in the little metal container on his right leg. So, unable to fly, he walks. On upper Broadway, pretty tired and discouraged by this time, Bixxy meets an intelligent young Cub Scout named Eddie. Eddie has an equally intelligent mother who knows that the two taxi-drivers across the street have a pigeon colony on their roof. To the taxi-drivers goes Bixxy, escorted by Eddie, his mother, and the entire troop of Cub Scouts. This scene is extremely interesting. The tar is removed from Bixxy's wings and legs by expert hands, the message with its mark of the U. S. Army is discovered. Frantic telephoning follows. To the taxi-drivers' modest kitchen come two New York policemen, two Secret Service men, one impressive military policeman, and, finally, the commanding general himself and his staff, including ex-Corporal Duke, Bixxy's keeper. The excitement is intense. Only the general knows the secret Bixxy carries; only he knows why it is extremely vital that the message *not* be delivered. In a later and hardly less exciting scene the Cub Scouts, the taxi-drivers, and Eddie's mother are summoned to the general's office in a down-town building, where they are told the whole story and Bixxy is presented with a medal.

Nothing could be funnier or truer to little-boy nature than the Cub Scouts—their intense curiosity, their excitement when the "brass hats" appear on the scene, their excellent discipline. Eddie's mother is exactly the kind of mother that all Cub Scouts should have. Bixxy is all that a loyal and well-trained, if somewhat absent-minded, carrier pigeon should be. This thoroughly satisfying tale is illustrated with lovely black and white end-papers and many drawings showing the course of Bixxy's journey.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING *Recording Technique, Surface*	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
*I CAN HEAR IT NOW, Vol. 2 (1945-1949). Edward R. Murrow, Fred W. Friendly. Columbia LP: ML 4261 78: MM 881 (5)		Sequel to last year's notable Vol. 1 (1932-1945). Similar, with improved narrative technique, longer excerpts, less hurry. Well-documented, entirely mature approach. Frank, semi-editorial comment on bias, Congress investigations, etc. Balance between narrative and documentary recorded excerpts is exactly right; induced drama is tense, often humorous, never hysterical or pompous. A really striking job in this new field.
PRELUDE TO PEARL HARBOR (1938-1941). Dick O'Connor, Kent Stevenson. (Recorded in England.) London LP: LLPA 1 (4 LP)		Antithesis of above—a puerile, incredibly wordy account of England's upholding of civilization before Pearl Harbor. Rapid-fire, alternating voices-of-doom blast out a running history in newsreel-radio-ad manner; historical voices are faked, scattered actual recordings, poorly dubbed, scarcely get ear-room—drowned by translations in preposterous assumed German, French, Polish accents. Some remarks will annoy Americans. This could so easily have been good! Eight LP sides.
*YOU ARE THERE—BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG; MAGNA CHARTA. CBS correspondents, radio cast. Columbia LP: ML 4149 78: MM 822 (3) MM 823 (3) (*From radio broadcasts.*)		Another variant of the radio-newsreel type of technique, here applied to re-activating history via straight drama, contemporary setting. "Gettysburg" especially is beautifully done, with a wealth of documentation, a minimum of histrionics, war-effect conventionalities. Few written accounts can match this in suggesting the horror of one of the deadliest of all wars, as well as the importance of the battle itself. Radio on the way to maturity!
*MOZART: PIANO CONCERTO #21 in C, K. 467. Robert Casadesus; New York Philharmonic, Munch. Columbia LP: ML 2067 78: MM 866 (4)	This would rate as a gorgeous recording, except that its huge, live sound is inappropriate to a Mozart concerto. Piano is hard, percussive.	An all-French collaboration—something less than superb. Casadesus' piano is cold, brilliant, almost cruel (may be in part the recording). Munch's orchestra is overtense.

*Reviewed from slow-speed version.

RADIO ROUNDUP, ADVERTISING JINGLE

IN THIS style-conscious age nothing is easier than to condemn a technique, a manner, an art, a way of doing things, even the mere choice of words for expression, not on content, not on effectiveness, but merely on the basis of style and the current prestige of that style. Most widely used styles today (shall we say, "manners of expression") are wholly underexploited, worse, grossly categorized in the strict vertical hierarchy of "higher" and "lower" expression. But are not these seeming limitations a measure of the smallish minds who have conceived these procedures—as working techniques?

We sneer at movies, funny papers, opera, horse opera, science-fiction, picture magazine, newsreel, radio roundup, advertising jingle, as though the present uses of these techniques were the ultimate exploitation. Absurd! We are quickly suspicious when some larger mind or group of minds (as man eventually will) probes deeper in these media (above), bracing the mere style towards higher ends. We object vociferously when a "cheap" manner (cheap—so far) is applied to a new and larger theme, a more significant structure.

Given the right creative minds, boogie-woogie, hillbilly, and hot jazz may match Beethoven, the soap opera mold a true Shakespearian content. Why not? The loftiest art of the historical drama may exploit the on-the-spot radio report and the newsreel technique. How can we carp at experimentation in these realms? We should rather rejoice—for today we have the finest array of latent expressive techniques ever known to man, the largest stockpile of raw material. As yet we have said next to nothing.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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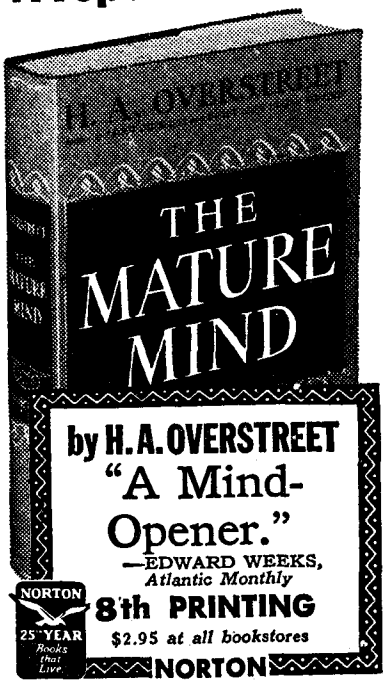

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DIALOGUE IN THE DARK

IT IS nothing, nothing, my child,
To be living under the ground.
Listen—the mole at our door
Is learning humanity's sound.

But where is the light, O my father,
And where are the clouds and the moon?
And where is the shore of the ocean?
And where is the cry of the loon?

It is nothing, nothing, my child,
To be scooping this clay with our shovels.
Listen—the gods of the world
Are pounding the roofs of our hovels.

But where is the day, O my father,
And where are the crystals of snow?
And where are the faces of mountains
Whose thighs we are hacking below?

It is nothing, nothing, my child,
To be dispossessing the worm.
Listen—the rumble increasing,
We must make our domicile firm.

But let us go up, O my father,
To walk through the cities of men!
Is there no urgency now
To view your tall towers again?

It is safer, safer, my child,
To cower here in retreat.
Hurry—some roots for our food
And gather some coal for our heat

And here we will live all our days
And learn to see in the dark.
Listen—the sky has just crashed
And each planet's a plummeting spark.

—HAROLD ZLOTNIK.

* * *

NO ROOM AT THE INN

Mary held her head proudly but she said nothing as she left them and walked across the fields. They had turned her out. They thought she had no place to go, but she had. Soon she came to a clump of trees by a pool and sat down on a log with relief.

The leaves were red and now and then one dropped into her lap. After all, she thought, she had not been turned out of her home for it was here, not in the stuccoed, improved house they were so proud of. What a queer one she was to stand so long looking at the sunset and walking alone in the woods and fields. In spare time a proper person might go to town to buy and sell and gossip.

Lately especially, Mary had felt drawn to this spot. She looked around her with new eyes, for it was the last time. All nature was at term. The apple trees were weighted down with fruit. The chestnuts were beginning to burst and fall to the ground. Soon would come the end of December. What of the other Mary? Had she, too, been happy and frightened, exalted and depressed? But no angel had appeared to her yet.

Hours passed and darkness came and frogs began to croak by the pool. She dipped her hand into the water. It was cold but silken and seemed the last and only friend to her and to the dear, impatient stirring she would never know again.

—EDITH LODGE.

* * *

AMERICAN MEN

American men
are the nicest I know.
Their humor is quick,
their ire is slow.

They walk and talk
in an easy amble,
but get there faster
than those who scramble.

English men
don't call one honey,
and worst of all
their jokes aren't funny.

Italians bow
with too much grace.
Frenchmen are Frenchmen,
all right in their place.

An American man
is the one for me.
I consider him perfect—
and so does he.

—FRANCESCA STILLMAN.

* * *

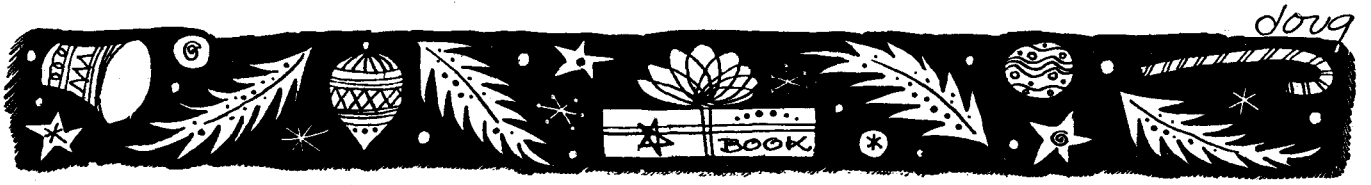
THE UNITIES

I hate these long, enormous novels
That mark the modern trend:
They have a beginning and a middle,
But no end.

—NORMAN R. JAFFRAY.

* * *

I feel a special sadness concerning the death, at the age of eighty, of Alexander Harvey, editor, short-story writer, and poet. I knew him, though I never met him, in the days when he was connected with *Current Literature*, which became *Current Opinion*. I was not of the inner circle of The Vagabonds, which used to meet in the National Arts Club with Mr. Harvey as their chief arbiter. I knew him principally through a strange little magazine he edited at his own expense, called *The Bang*. It was printed on both sides of one large sheet of fairly heavy paper and then folded so that the consecutive pages came into position. If you cut the pages, it fell apart! For some reason Mr. Harvey liked my poetry and would occasionally print some of it. He printed other people too; Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff was one, I remember. Nobody ever made a nickel out of this venture so far as I recall. I know I never did. But it was inspiriting to receive notes from someone who evidently liked what you wrote because he considered it art. He admired the sonnets of a nineteenth-century poet, Jones Very, which I could not so much admire; but he also wrote a delicious bit of biography, "Shelley's Elopement," and some well-turned tales in a Gallic manner now somewhat dated. He wrote on the Greek dramatists, translated them and penned essays on Jesus and His friends. Latterly, they say, he had been writing religious verse. His mind, however, was far from orthodox, as I perceived it. He had a long editorial career with various newspapers and magazines, and was even, in the late Nineties, secretary to our consul general in Egypt. A man of cultivation, learning, and warmth of heart. May his soul enjoy Hellenic repose! —WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.



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(Continued on page 42)

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(Continued from page 41)

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INTELLIGENT YOUNG MAN driving Nevada, Dec. 27th, wishes congenial passenger. Box 965-A.

YOUNG BUSINESS MAN desires correspondence with refined young lady. Box 968-A.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL MALE, loving humor, music, culture, and humans, invites stimulating correspondence from gay, clever, intelligent young femme. Box 970-A.

WANTED: good used fur coat, size 14. Reasonable. Box 972-A.

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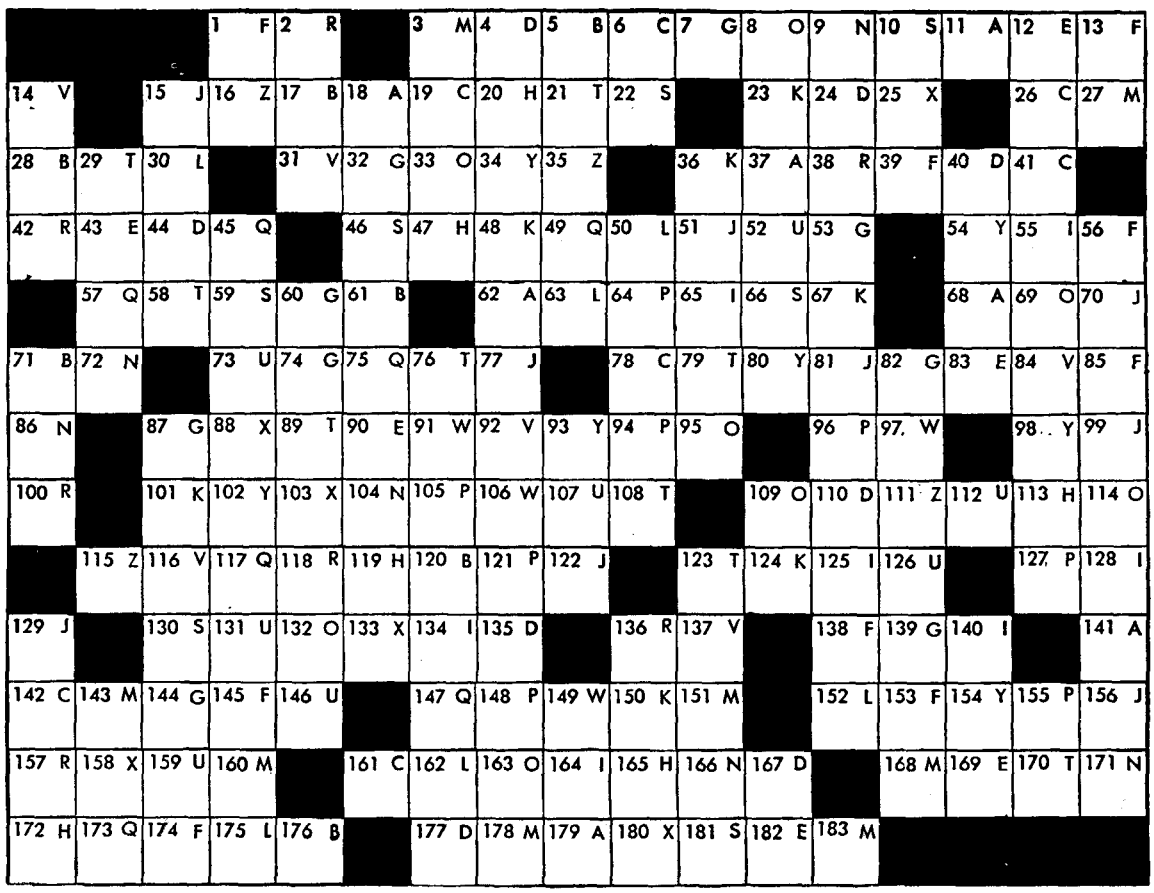
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. To be grovelingly submissive (2 wds.).	37 18 11 141 62 68 179
B. Biblical heroine of an opera by Saint-Saens, 1877.	71 17 176 120 28 5 61
C. A piece of fiction treating of U. S. frontier life, etc.	26 142 19 161 41 78 6
D. First name of famous German painter and engraver (1471-1528).	110 40 177 4 44 167 24 135
E. Hero of an opera by Wagner and of a novel by Bulwer-Lytton.	83 12 182 43 90 169
F. Sack or pillage (hist.).	56 1 145 85 39 138 174 153 13
G. Blunts; makes dull.	139 53 87 82 60 32 74 144 7
H. A water-sylph, subject of a popular fairy romance by Fouque, 1811.	20 172 119 47 165 113
I. Great plain in ancient Medea where were bred fine horses used by Persian kings.	128 65 134 125 140 164 55
J. To support actively (2 wds.; slang).	122 156 15 81 77 99 70 51 129
K. Act of buying; purchase (law).	124 101 36 23 150 48 67
L. American legislator of New York State (liquor legislation, 1896).	152 175 162 63 50 30
M. A fortified place or secure retreat.	168 178 160 3 151 27 143 183

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Reputed Gaelic author of a group of poems, translated and published by James MacPherson, 1760-63.	9 72 86 166 171 104
O. Harmonites (eccl. hist.).	33 69 8 109 132 95 163 114
P. In a glacier, a dark-colored layer or zone containing debris (2 wds.; phys. geog.).	94 96 148 105 155 127 121 64
Q. A locomotive and tender running without cars (local U. S.).	45 117 49 57 173 75 147
R. A one-grained wheat grown in poor soil in central Europe; regarded as the primitive type.	100 136 2 42 38 157 118
S. Swiss poet, mystic, founder of so-called science of physiognomy (1741-1801).	181 59 46 66 130 22 10
T. Opera by Wagner, performed in 1850.	29 79 123 58 108 76 21 89 170
U. Spasmodic pains, generally brief.	112 126 107 146 52 131 159 73
V. "Ancient Epic Poem in Six Books," by MacPherson, 1762.	31 84 137 14 92 116
W. The Mohammedan call to prayer (Arabic).	149 91 106 97
X. A mineral whose crystals, when deep red or black, have been cut into very brilliant gems (mineral.).	133 103 180 158 88 25
Y. Applied in mills to a special cotton gin.	34 93 54 154 80 102 98
Z. The eyes as luminous and spherical (poetic).	35 16 115 111

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 26 of this issue.

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